

THE
Epistle and Preface
To the BOOK against the Blasphemous
Socinian Heresie
VINDICATED;
And the CHARGE therein
against Socinianism, made Good.
IN ANSWER TO
TWO LETTERS.

By J. GAILHARD, Gent.

Hinc Drances, Therfites inde.

If any teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Doctrine which is according to Godliness: He is proud, knowing nothing, but doing about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmising: Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: From such withdraw thy self, 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5.

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Epistle and Prose

Continued

VOLUME 1

And the whole of the
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AN
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Two Letters.

HAVING lately publish'd a Book against the present great grievance of the Nation in Matters of Religion, *Socinianism* I mean, and knowing how the Pen-men of that Party are now fallen in a course of writing from time to time against what comes out in Opposition to them, I indeed looked for an Answer, but thought they would have gone about to refute my Arguments, as 'tis the usual way of those who follow the School Rules; but I therein find my self disappointed, and am apt to believe that these Men do so far depend upon what their great Masters have done, as to think they now may sit still under the shadow of their Works; for *It is plain, say they, that the most polite and rational Modern Sermons and other Moral Discourses, are extremely beholden to Socinus his Works.* Yet instead of what I expected, out comes from behind the Curtain and in disguise, one of those Fancies which our *Ideists* are so fond of, under the name of *An Apology for the Parliament, &c.* and this in *Two Letters by different Hands.* I must need fear what will become of me! But Sirs, it is not in you the part of generous Enemies, tho' to support a weak Cause, to come Two against One; yet for what they have done, 'tis no matter, for Truth and I against any two or

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twenty such Hands: And the Truth now in question, tho' they would have driven it into Corners, hath gotten the upper-hand, and is so strongly settled, that it hath disheartened its Adversaries from making any attempt upon it; and they have chosen to meddle with other things, and leave that untouched.

This Answer no Answer, this Apology or Two Letters, having been sent me down into the Country, I fell on perusing of them, to see what they contained as to Matters in question and the Cause in hand, but 'twas not to be found, and so I concluded it to be lost among them, hardly any Steps thereof being left, only instead of it, I lighted upon Reflections and Invectives (which that sort of Men are full of and very free to bestow) against the Author of the Book: they fly off from the Point and avoid coming to discuss it: What Notion of theirs, can this way of deciding Controversies, be grounded upon? No Answer, in the least to any of my Arguments, tho' I had given them a large Field: They being a People not usually Mute, may not I reasonably infer, that seeing upon things in question they say nothing, then they have nothing to say, and so yield the Cause, if not positively, yet by a good Consequence; thus they save me the trouble to re-
fute any thing, or to add to what I said upon the Matter; tho' about it I have many more things to say. The Author of the First Letter gives a convincing and short Reason, why he Answers none of my Arguments, I
Page 15. *thought you an unfit Writer on behalf of the Trinity, and therefore did not so much as read over your Book;* tho' in another place he saith, *I have dipp'd into it here and there, and have staged it over.* This is magisterially enough decided; but there is in such Decisions more Mercury than Salt: You say I am an unfit writer upon those Matters, and yet you did not so much as read over my Book; this is wisely and learnedly spoken, 'tis an unanswerable Argument, but if you had given any for me to answer, I might well have desired the Reader, by this Paw of yours, to have judg'd of the Lion, how great a Logician you are to draw Conclusions out of Premises.

Page 4.

But

But what would ye have done if there had been no Epistle nor Preface to carp at? Then 'tis likely you would have taken no notice of my Book, or else why do ye leave the Principal for the Accessary? Such a Carriage gives me cause to suspect, that seeing you take no notice of it, you look upon't as a Moriel of too hard a digestion for your Stomach, therefore you meddle not with it: ye Answer it not, but Invectives against the Author must do the work; for indeed whilst in these Letters I was seeking for what I could not find, I found what I was not looking for, soft Words and hard Arguments from Men who would seem to have engros'd all Reason unto themselves, I sought for, but found very soft Arguments, if any at all, yet hard Words: Truly Sirs, to Answer in your own way, I could almost say, I have happen'd to tread upon a Nest of Wasps, so had cause to expect some of them would come out Buzzing about my Ears, that's all the harm they can do me, if they intend any thing more, then I hope they lost their Point and missed their Aim.

I think that what I said to prove my Assertions, might in some degree have been taken notice of: but seeing they have no mind to meddle with nor remove the Weight, there let it ly for me; yet tho' as to the Matter they offer'd nothing to Answer, rather than to be altogether silent, we must turn to what they otherwise have started up, tho' not belonging to the Subject of my Book: They act like those who shot at a Man from behind a Hedge, and so think they may with safety to themselves wound their Enemy who cannot well close up with them; for they, with being nameless and in their holes, have taken sufficient care to provide against it, and none can swear against them. Ye are the Men: However, because such Men would call one dumb, who should say nothing to their Imputations and Misconstructions, tho' never so groundless, I shall by the grace of God take notice of most things in the Letters, and therein hope to clear my self of their Aspersions, also to demonstrate how they are guilty of some things which they would charge me with, or of the same nature, and I shall examine what here and there they say about Matters in question: Sometimes

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I shall Answer both Letters together in those things which tend to the same purpose, and at other times asunder, and as I shall see cause: however I shall not do't in order, but here and there according as I light upon the things in the Letters, which I intend to examine one after another.

Page 3.

Gal. 4.
18.

With an idle and ridiculous Fancy of an *Apology*, they would bring me under a necessity of making my own: *Fervency of Zeal for the Glory of God*, is the first thing and in the first Line, laid to my charge; but this, *Paul* brings me off when he said, *It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing*: And that the thing in question which I appear for, is Good, very Good, I appeal not only to Scripture, but also to the Testimony of the whole Primitive Church, of all Christian Protestant Churches, specially of our Church in this Kingdom; and if according to their Principles of a private Judge I must have it within me, I want it not; for in my Conscience I am so fully satisfied it is Good, that thorough God's Grace strengthening me, I am ready to lay down my Life, and that's for the same Cause for which my blessed Saviour laid down his, and so many more after him, namely that he was truly, that is in a true and proper sense, God's own and only begotten Son: and when upon this Cause of his, Men are neither cold nor hot, he spueth them out of his mouth.

Rev. 3.
15.

Page 3.

After this, out comes a volley of Trash, the product of an elevated Fancy and inflamed Imagination, whereby things of Moment are wrested and ridiculed, tho' maybe, the Party takes it for a great piece of Wit: and whether I will or not, he would make me to say that which I never so much as thought upon; and because he would make of it a Stage-Play, tho' very insipid and profane, he brings me in as *Postponing the Glory of God*, as he saith, to Temporal Concerns; how this can agree with what he said just before of my fervent Zeal for that Glory, let him declare: I think by means of the word *Postpone*, I may understand something of the Writers meaning, and I believe some among them could tell News, how it came to pass that my Book which was intended to have been published

lished by *Candlemas Term*, for all the endeavours used to hasten it out, came forth only the day before the Prorogation: I have cause to suspect there was some tampering by a sort of Men diligent in their Concerns and of unwearied Endeavours to promote their Cause, for *the Children of this World are in their generation wiser than the Children of Light*: I doubt some of them ^{Luke 16.} plowed with my Heifer, however let none boast before the time, for thorough God's direction that which last Year was not done, as indeed for that reason it could not be, may happen to be done this; however to God we leave the Success.

Yet as in my Preface I gave an account of the effectual Care which the Parliament of *Scotland* had taken to put a stop to your damnable Heresies in that Kingdom; so now I must tell that which ye know well enough, but may be every one else doth not, how in *Ireland* about the beginning of *September* last, the Committee for Religion having examined the Carriage of one of your Gang, *M. Toland*, who, no doubt, was gone over to promote the Cause, and made their Report to the House, immediately they passed a Vote, that his Book should be burnt by the hand of the Executioner, and his Person taken into Custody to be proceeded against; but he finding the Place too hot for him, made a shift to escape and come over, or else he had been laid up, but we hope here he shall either be followed by divine Mercy, or meet with human Justice; for we have ground to think that the Parliament of *England*, with as much Zeal as those of *Scotland* and of *Ireland*, will appear for the Cause and Honour of God, and as one of the Wolves hath been unkennel'd in *Ireland*, so that same and others, shall here be so too: and 'tis but what all obstinate Leaders of such miserable wretches who deny the Lord that bought them, do justly deserve, to be branded with B, that every one might know them for Blasphemers. by reason of the blasphemous, heretical, and impious Opinions, which those despisers of God, with impunity, whereat they grow bolder, do daily publish and spread abroad, and that in so bold and licentious a manner, as was hardly ever allowed in any Christian State. The Empe:or *Theodosius* left a
Precedent

Precedent in such cases, for by a Law he ordered the fifteen Volumes which impious *Porphyry* had written against the Christian Religion, every where to be burnt and destroyed.

And indeed 'tis but what the Anti-Christian Writings of such Miscreants as were *Celsus*, *Porphyrius*, *Julian* the Apostate, and the like deserve to be: their Works were levelled against the true God in the most Holy Trinity, and against the Person and Divinity chiefly of our blessed Lord and Saviour, and are not the *Socinian* Books so too? The like Crime deserves the like Punishment; this I speak in commendation of the Zeal and Justice of the *House of Commons* in *Ireland*: Something more I must say, and tho' I am sure to be disowned by *Socinians* and *Socinianizers*, yet I hope not so by those who are really concern'd for the Honour of the glorious Trinity and for their Religion; 'tis this, It were but Justice and Christian Prudence, if the Pen-men of the *Antitrinitarian* and *Antichristian* Doctrines were burnt at the Fingers end, to disable them from dropping their Poison upon Paper: if only paring their Nails could do't, it would be well; but I am of opinion, that alone will not do't, nor Gospel-Arguments, but the Authority of the Law must: and this the Parliament of *Ireland* in their Wisdom have found necessary, and being satisfied how things of that nature come within the compass of their Jurisdiction, tho' *M. Toland* in his Letter to a Member of the *House of Commons* there, pag. 32. declares he is a perfect stranger to any such Power claim'd by that Honourable Body, tho' in himself, he was conscious he might not say so in the Original Copy: and his Apology is of the same opinion, tho' he more cunningly meddles with it, and brings it in as the Judgment, as he saith, of several Members of the Committee, pag. 23. Which are but Reflections insinuated against the Right of Parliaments in general, and so reaches every Parliament wheresoever. But there are several Flaws in that Apology.

Here I meet with some Apologist whom I know well by the *Stile*, tho' others of the kind make use of the same Ink; such are in jest Apologists for Parliaments, but

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but in earnest, against; indeed I think that to study that common place, and to erect themselves into Apologists, consists with their own Interest; for on their side, there is more need of Apologies than of Panegyrics. But I must speak of other things.

Both Writers come upon me with a Charge indeed, I am a Sanguinary Man, a Brother to Papists, a Jew, a Persecutor, a bloody-minded Believer, and such other words to the same purpose: I shall not say this is much Dust, but great Thunder-claps, which shall end like crackling of Thorns under the Pot. The ground of all this is my Humble Address to both Houses of Parliament, that they would be pleased to take some care of the Cause of Christ, and to put a curb upon his Enemies; such I call those who would rob him of his Divine Nature and Attributes, and attempt to overthrow the first Article of our Faith, of One God in Three Persons. There are some Men in the World, that if one doth but look them in the Face, they are apt to cry out, Murder, whether or not at that time a guilty Conscience flies into their Faces, God knows; That same may happen sometimes to disturb them so far, as to make them grossly mistake in their Judgment as about Things so about Persons, as they are very much in me, who in my Heart and Opinion am as much against Persecution upon account of Religion, and for a due regard to tender Consciences, as any Man in the World. When the Question is about indifferent and not very material things, then for Peace and Charity's sake, Gentleness and Meekness ought to prevail, but it must be otherwise when Fundamentals are not only shaken but overturned; and when Religion it self is pulled up by the very root, as 'tis when humane Reason is made a standing Rule whereby to judge of Revelation, when the Doctrines of the most Holy Trinity, of the Satisfaction which the Lord Jesus hath by the Sacrifice of himself made for our Sins, with other things thereupon depending, and what Scriptures with the received *Creds* of the Primitive Church do affirm about it, and what our Church believes; I say it ought to be otherwise when all these lie at stake and are blown up at once: then or never 'tis high time to speak out especially when

we see, how boldly and openly these things are carried on: We use to say, *There is a difference between mad and stark staring mad*; People distemper'd in their Minds, are dealt withal according unto the nature and degree of their Distemper; some confin'd to their Chambers, others to their Beds, others bound and chained up: The like we observe in the Distempers of the Politick Body; he who rashly speaks ill of the Government deserves some Punishment, but not so great as he who violently attempts to overthrow it, or to destroy the Persons in whose hands God hath lodged the Power; so it must be in spiritual Diseases which affect the Body of the Church; and these several ways I mean, when I speak of a true and proper Remedy, whereof the applying depends upon the Skill of the Physician; 'tis not any effect of Cruelty, to make Incisions, and cut off dead Flesh out of a Wound to prevent a Gangrene, nor to restrain People that have the Plague from coming among those that are free from it, for fear of infecting them: So 'tis no Persecution to take care that Hereticks, (such all Orthodox Christian Churches take *Socinians* to be) do not come in among those that are sound in the Faith: This great Danger may in a due respect and humble way be represented to the superiour Power, whose Office is to prevent and remedy Inconveniences. This I humbly conceive to be a Branch of the Right of the Subject, and it may not be called, To prescribe them what to do; they cannot be every where, nor know every thing, therefore stand in need of being informed: this is the usual course of Justice; for no Redress when no Complaint is made; and I was so far from presuming to prescribe therein, that in my Epistle, pag. 18. I declare against it.

All that are no *Socinians* are agreed how their Tenets about the most holy Trinity are heretical, and consequently contrary to the Doctrine of the Church, as by Law established: Now the Laws of the Land do forbid any thing to be published that is contrary to it; it is known to all, how *Socinians* do in Print, and otherwise, daily publish their blasphemous and heretical Opinions, whereby they break the Law, the Consequence is good to say, they deserve to be punished, as do

do all Law-Breakers ; and I hope they cannot pretend to come in within the Act of Indulgence ; tho they deny their Opinions to be heretical, yet that's not enough for them to be accounted innocent ; for 'tis very rare to see a guilty Man, when he is lyable to, and sure of Punishment, to confess his own Guilt, yet his bare denial doth not free him from it ; for if to deny was enough to clear, no Man could be found guilty.

Both Authors of the Letters are very angry, and much cry out against what I said about a Field of Honour, which is, in relation to the Cause, to be defended against its Enemies, and not to any capital Punishment, which had been an imprudent thing of me, and contrary to my inclination, to have suggested against Hereticks ; but these Gentlemen, who often call me hot and fiery, hastily skipp'd from the *Second Page* of my Epistle to the *Seventeenth* of the same, to make the Field of Honour to be *Smithfield* : These two things are written too far asunder, to be joyned together, as indeed there was in my thoughts nothing like *Smithfield*, when I was insinuating, that as God's Work is glorious, so the occasion offer'd to promote it is as a Field of Honour, as expressed in the place, and what there I mentioned of one who for *Socinianism* suffered in *Smithfield*, was not of my own, but in consequence of a Citation out of *Sir Thomas Ridley's View of the Civil and Ecclesiastical Laws*, where he saith, *Against such is provided Sentence of Death* ; and there I gave two Instances, how what he said had been executed : Let any impartial Man peruse the places, and they shall find it to be as I say, and then may take notice how rash, hasty, and unjust are these Men, who pretend to so much Calmness and Meekness of Spirit, in making Reflections upon others, who, through God's Grace, have a more Christian charitable frame of Spirit than themselves : We indeed hate abominable Blasphemies and Heresies, but neither Blasphemers nor Hereticks, for some of them, God, if he pleases, may shew Mercy, and give Repentance unto ; their Conversion not their Ruin is wish'd for, and also Endeavours are used to preserve others from being infected.

1 Cor. 2.

4, 5.

The true and short account of the business is this; Things being in the state and condition as I represent in my Epistle and Preface, I looked upon it as a Duty incumbent upon me as a Christian, with what little strength God hath given me, to lay it out in the Defence of the most just and just Cause in the World, namely, the due Honour of the most holy and adorable Trinity, and the Divinity of our blessed Lord and Saviour, and of the Holy Ghost; which so many Legions of Martyrs have freely shed their Blood, and gloriously laid down their Lives for: I went not about to support it with *entwining Words of Man's Wisdom*, or with studied, affected, pompous Expressions; which only bad Causes stand in need of; but as our Faith doth not stand in the Wisdom of men, but in the Power of God, so I endeavoured with good Arguments drawn out of his Word, which hitherto remain unanswered, to confute Heresie and Sophistry: One must not so much mind Words and Style, when the Question is about Things. Those Men who mind more how they say than what they say, desire their own Glory more than the Good of others: In a Declamation one hath more Freedom of Style than in difficult and deep Points of Divinity, Philosophy, and Mathematicks; certain Matters are not adapted to a lofty Style; they that are so fond of this more than of the other, are like those who prefer the Shell before the Oyster, or the Stone before the Kernel. Now to come to that which concerns me, I say, it being no evil thing to promote a good Cause by all lawful means, for Right and Favour to countenance it, are not incompatible, not to be wanting in any thing depending upon me; the Parliament then sitting, and I knowing how there are several honorable and worthy Members who lay to Heart the Glory of God, wherein the good of the Nation doth consist, with all due Respect in an Epistle Dedicatory I humbly commended and offered it to the serious Consideration of both Houses, in hope that this might happen to be a means, amidst their application to the great National Concerns of another nature, to draw their Eyes towards this Cause, thereby to bring a Blessing of God upon their Proceedings; for the greater

greater the Emergencies and Occasions are, the more need of God's Favour, which may be procured no better than with doing such things as are acceptable in his sight, as is the care of his Honour and Service.

After I had done the most, and in my Book about several Points proved the Falseness of *Socinianism*, I thought I might shew the Necessity of a Remedy, and endeavour to set to work as many Hands as I could; and as no Man may deny it to be the Concern of a Parliament (for every new one doth appoint a Committee of Religion) to look into things belonging to, always necessary, but specially when the most fundamental part of the Doctrine of the Church by Law established, is daily, publicly, and in print stricken at; so I thought I might humbly address to both Houses, as the undisputably competent Judge of such things, wherein I think I have done nothing contrary to the Laws of God and of the Land; nor to the Rules of Charity, and so deserve not the hard Names nor ill Language given me, by those who have no better Argument to defend a bad Cause, for all their pretended good nature, and to throw Dust into Peoples Eyes, only to shuffle off the matters in question.

The truth is, that Society of Men are against all manner of restraint in matters of Religion, they would have every one believe and profess what seems good in his eye; and so of the Church, which is the House of God, to make a meer *Babel* and Confusion without Order and Rule, which Frame will at last rend in in pieces and ruin it: In the Church there must be some Authority of the Rulers of it over the Members; Christ hath formed and given it a Being, and left Rules for the preservation and well-being thereof, the Administration of which he hath committed to her Governours; and to what purpose should those Laws be, if there was no Executive Power, there is an Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction with a Coercive and Expulsive Power; there are Pales and Walls to hinder Wild Boats and ranging Bears from coming in, and Doors to turn out those who offend, infect, dishonour, endanger and would undermine it: And *Conventions*, which I see they can not for, are necessary from time to time

to promote her good, and to remedy or prevent Inconveniences; chiefly those which relate to Doctrine; and tho' we attribute an Infallibility to none of them, as there is none upon Earth, yet 'tis their Province for their own Members to declare about Heresie, Blasphemy, and other things contrary to sound Doctrine and Piety: To me there appears none more competent Judges in such things, than those who have Christ's Commission to feed and to rule over his Flock, and in the right administration of this Office, the Civil Powers called the *Nursing Fathers* of the Church, are bound to protect and assist them against the Enemies of the holy Trinity, and of the Person of Jesus Christ, such are *Socinians*.

Tho' according to Times and Places, Men have different Notions of divine Truths; yet a real divine Truth is such at all times and in all places; 'tis not the Opinion which Men have of it that makes it to be Truth or not Truth, nor can the several contrary Interpretations change it; so if the 39 Articles, specially those that relate to Faith, were true at first, they must be so at last, and no following Convocation can make them not to be what they are, or to be what they are not; 'tis not the stamp of any human Authority that may make a divine Institution to be divine or not; and tho a new Convocation should repeal what in Fundamentals a former one settled, yet some reasons for it ought to be produced: About doubtful things Advice may be asked, as it was in the Dispute about Circumcision, when *Paul* and *Barnabas* were sent to *Jerusalem* for Counsel about it; nothing must be omitted that may lawfully contribute towards clearing of the matter; but when after a serious Examination by the Rule of God's Word, according to the true signification of the words in the Original, the scope of the place, and the Analogy of Faith, Articles of Faith once are declared, 'tis fit to stand to them, and the Church by which they are received, is enabled to judge of what is or is not contrary thereunto, and to keep from coming in those who would against her mind, and turn out her own Members, which hold Doctrines contrary to the Truth she professeth: So the Church of *England* being satisfied

satisfied that the *Socinian* Tenets are quite contrary to the 1st. and 2d. Articles of Faith she believes; hath right to turn out *Socinians* that are within her Pales, and hinder those who would come in from without. And if she wants a sufficient Power, she may very well sue for help from the Civil, which is the legal way for Relief; and when this takes an effectual Course about it, 'tis Wrong and Injury to the Right and Liberty of the Subject, no more than 'tis Injustice to hinder one Fellow-Subject from hurting another: This is no *Papish* Principle, nor contrary to those of *Reformation*: But where a National Church is settled, to allow every Man a liberty to frame unto himself what Notions he pleases of Religion, then to promote, vent and publish it, to the Disturbance of what is already settled by Law, you thereby introduce Confusion into the Church, which may soon become Anarchy in the Government, which to prevent in my humble Address to the Parliament, I thought the Laws now in being about such things might be executed, and, if in their Wisdom they thought fit, new ones be enacted.

What *Papists* believe or do, as to Authority, about Interpretation of Scriptures, is no Rule nor Precedent for us; there is a sad Experience in the World of the nature of the Spirit which they are acted by, and of the Methods they have taken to support their spiritual Tyranny over the Consciences and Souls, yea, Lives of Men; they made themselves Parties and Judges, and would admit or hear of no Reasons contrary to theirs, which were grounded not upon God's Word (tho' in some things they pretend it) but their own Traditions and Practice to their Church? Now among us you find no such thing, the Law is open for you, if you take Scripture to be it, whereof you sadly wrest the Words, contrary to their natural Sense, without giving any good Reason for it, and you stand by your selves in defiance and opposition of the general Consent of the Universal Church, which condemned those unsound Men, when they appeared against the Person of our Saviour and Lord. And here I must say, we, no more than you, receive the Authority of Antiquity or of Fathers upon their own bottom; for we agree they were fallible, when

Eccles. 4.
10.

when they said so and so; but whether it so saying they spake truth, is well worth enquiry into; I will compare them with Scripture, and if they agree with it, I will agree with them: And this is to me a strengthening Evidence, that I am not singular, seeing others as well as I, could in the Word of God find those Truths which I do believe: *It is as him that is alone*, abounds in his own Sense, and thinks he knows more than all the World besides; for the application of Scripture Truths, it may be every ones Right to direct himself by his own Reason enlightened by the Spirit; as to the Explication, a very great care ought to be had, and still according to the Rule of God's Word, with all the help he can get besides; but when they have Opinions which they find are generally opposed, People so modest, so quiet, and of the Character they give of themselves, not to disturb others, should keep it within themselves, and not be so fervent as ye are, to spread it abroad, whether your Zeal be without or against Knowledge: And if every one who pretends to be a Member of the Church be so busie as ye are to promote their Opinions, and no Curb be put upon Interpretations, then no end of Heresie, Blasphemy, or of all sorts of the worst Opinions.

But before I proceed, I think fit to pull down that Strong-hold of theirs, as they take it to be, tho' rather Sandy Foundation of a free liberty for every one to make what Interpretations they please: and that I shall the more willingly do, tho' as briefly as I can, because 'tis a Matter controverted between them and us, which I had no occasion to meddle with in my Book. To begin, I say, as there is a Right, so there is a false Interpretation of Scripture: The Right is that which gives the true sense and meaning the False on the contrary: Now if every private Man might Interpret Scripture, what monstrous Interpretations would there be, as we see it too much in the World; and this is the ground of Heresy, Blasphemy and Fanaticism; which to prevent, the Lord Jesus, as St. Paul saith in those two places, where he mentions the Offices in the Church, hath settled *Prophets and Teachers*: Every private Man may Read but not Interpret Scripture

* 1 Cor.

12.28. and

Ephes. 4.

11.

Every private Man may Read but not Interpret Scripture

ture, which in this Case, is the first thing to be known; For, saith the Apostle, *knowing this first, that no Prophecy of the Scripture is of any private Interpretation,* 2 Pet. 1. 20, 21. so the Interpretation must come from whence the Revelation came, 'tis but one and the same Spring; therefore in the next Verse he clears the Matter, *For Prophecy came not in old time, by the Will of Man; but holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;* which doth exclude as humane private Revelation, so also humane private Interpretation: And herein Paul joineth with Peter, when he puts this Question, *Do all Interpret?* Which contains an Exclusive 1 Cor. 12. how all do not, no more than all are no workers of 30. Miracles,

Furthermore we must know how Scripture hath a binding Power not only directive but also decisive over the Conscience; so that thereby the Conscience, far from having that free liberty, is tied and bound to the determination of the Word; or else no Man that believes an Opinion contrary to sound Doctrine and never so heretical and blasphemous, could be guilty of Sin: But we are assured of the contrary, for *they who wrest the Scriptures, do so unto their own destruction;* tho' a man must be very cautious not to go against his Conscience, yet where there is a Competition between God and Man, the Word of God and the Judgment of Man; when each challenge of us a Consent, we must give it the Word which certainly is true and infallible, preferably before the Conscience, which may be seduced and erroneous, which happens often when 'tis guided by humane Reason. In Scripture is in matters of Faith a convincing and constraining Power, which in Conscience we are bound to submit to; in Humane things, the Judge is not properly Judge, except he Judges according to the Law; for he hath no power to alter or corrupt, but to declare the true sense of it. The Interpretation of the Divine Law which the Question is now about, may happen to be mistaken, but the Law never, for 'tis Infallible, as being the Word of the True and Infallible God; hence is derived its Divine and Undisputable Authority, beyond that of any thing else, and it should work upon men more than Miracles,

2 Pet. 3. 16.

Luke 16.
31.

Miracles, even than raising from the Dead, which may be called the greatest of all; for, *they that hear not Moses and the Prophets, will not be persuaded tho' one rise from the Dead.* The reason is, because therein the Spirit of God speaks, and thereby leads us into all Truth: And indeed, if Scripture was not the end of Debates in matters of Religion, our Conscience could never be settled nor quiet; for that same thing, no Humane Reason, Power or Judgment, is able to effect; but we acquiesce to, rest and depend upon the Word of the God of Truth: and if at the Bar of Conscience there was no such binding Rule, but men were left to their own private Judgment, none would be bound to believe Scripture; but always live amidst Doubts, Difficulties and Conjectures, not to say, singular Notions, Fancies and Dreams; and so we could never be at a certainty: Besides, that after this, there were no Sin in any man to receive any sense of Scripture, tho' never so contrary to the intention of God's Spirit therein; and, as said before, never so Erroneous and Heretical, only because it is according to a man's own private Opinion and deluded Imagination; which is to take away the Obligation whereby Conscience and the whole Soul are bound to believe the Truth of Scripture only, and not false Interpretations.

Luke 20.
38.

2 Cor. ii.
8.

1 Cor. 2.
12, 13.

Besides, there is in Scripture some matters of Faith which are not so obvious to the Soul and to Reason, as matters of Fact are to the Eye and Ear; as also there are others not to be Interpreted according to the plain and literal sense as they seem to be: Out of the number and variety of such afforded in the Word, I shall bring only two Instances: Can they think that this Consequence by our Saviour, *God is the God of the living, and not of the dead; therefore there shall be a resurrection of the dead,* is plain and obvious to any man; or that this is true, *Paul is a robber of Churches,* because he said, *I robbed other Churches:* Hence appeareth the danger and inconvenience of allowing of such a particular free liberty of Interpreting Scripture, seeing it can be and is so much abused. We are taught in the word, that *we have received the Spirit of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us*

of God, and which the Holy Ghost teacheth; if human Reason were a sufficient Light for a Man to enable him to interpret Scriptures, then Paul's Prayer, that God would give the Ephesians the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, &c. The like for the Colossians, were in vain; for 'tis frivolous to ask what one hath already, and wants not at all: this Liberty which they allow themselves every day, to search and find out new Interpretations, whereby the Minds of Men are tossed, and never to be settled, cannot consist with the true Faith revealed in the Word of God, which we are commanded to be steadfast in, and to be rooted and built up in Christ, and stablished in the Faith: and not carried about with divers and strange Doctrines: Certainly that freedom of interpreting is herein forbidden, and so are we forbidden to believe those false Glosses and Interpretations; for saith the Apostle, Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; the reason is this, Because many false Prophets are gone out into the world, who allow themselves a freedom of interpreting Scripture according to their own humour and fancy, no ways allowed by the laws of God, and should not be by the Laws of Men; a Curb ought to be put upon such wandering profane Thoughts, at least upon the publishing of them. The Adversaries who are so fond and conceited of their human Reason, Learning, and Wisdom, might take notice how the Apostle hits them, when he calls those who give false interpretations of, and wrest Scriptures, both unstable and unlearned; certainly those Men are unstable, who make use of a pretended Liberty, ever to give Scripture new interpretations, as suggested by their Reason; so to day they may give one, and the next another different from and contrary to it; and is not this Change a Fickleness and Unstability? These unstable Men would make those different interpretations to be a part and proof of their Learning; but far from that; for Peter calls them unlearned, whereby he gives a great blow to that Diana-Idol of theirs. But as I hope hereafter by the Grace of God, to have an occasion of enlarging

upon this, I shall for the present forbear saying any more to it

Page 8.

What he brings in of *Banner* and *Latimer*, about the Interpretation of the Words, *This is my Body*, cannot answer his purpose; that Instance indeed can shew how a Text may differently be interpreted, and that one may happen wrongfully to suffer for a good Cause; and how the strongest side and most supported, is not always the best: But this cannot prove, that because one has unjustly suffered, the other may not justly suffer; that sort of Men who are always wholly bent to provide for their safety, would insinuate how no Man should be called to account for any wresting of, or putting false interpretations upon Scripture, tho never so false, blasphemous, impious, and heretical, because he who doth so, believeth them not to be such, which is their own case: it doth not follow, that a Truth, tho made doubtful, because to day 'tis supported, and to morrow shall be oppressed, must not be owned; and a Restraint put upon those who oppose it: The Merit of the Cause is impartially to be enquired into; and when Truth is found out, not only it must be exalted, but also its contrary is to be kept under: Tho *Queen Mary* supported a bad Cause and suppressed a good one, it doth not follow but that *Queen Elizabeth* did well to suppress a bad Cause and support a good one: Tho an innocent be brought to suffer, yet the guilty must not go free for all that: Because formerly innocent Blood was shed, must not Justice now be executed upon Criminals? 'Tis not the Opinion of Men but the Truth of the Thing which makes any one guilty or innocent; the Law is judge of it: So in Matters of Religion, 'tis not the Interpretation of the Text, nor the Opinion which the Interpreter hath of the Soundness of his Interpretation that makes it Orthodox and sound, but the Word which explains it self; for what in one place is dark, is plain in some other; and when some Men, contrary to those Lights, will set up heretical and blasphemous Opinions, and therein grow obstinate, only because they think to be in the right; upon such account the Word of God authoriseth Men to enact such

such penal Laws as they shall think most conducing for the glory of God, and to have them put in execution, chiefly when the Parties against the known Laws of the Land do publish, and in defiance of all, at the Parliament Doors, offer their heretical Books with words to this purpose; *I put a most excellent Book into your hand, pray read it with attention, and when you are Converted strengthen your Brethren;* thus profanely abusing God's most holy Word.

They are by no means pleased with my way of Writing, but I like it the better for their disliking it: They find fault first with the Matter, Order and Expression; secondly, with my often using Scripture; thirdly, with my Sallying, as they call it, into sundry Metaphors. The first of the two ironically talks of *depth of Learning, height of Fancy*, &c. which is proper to Fantastical Men, who would transform Fancy, yea all Religion into Reason. The other calls it, *A World of School Cant, which now a days goes for deep Learning*: So both, tho' in a different way, talk of depth of Learning; that People would have others like themselves, to build upon no Foundation but Humane Reason, which is not allowable; chiefly in things of the nature of those now in question: what they call *Cant*, is out of Scripture, Writings of Antient Fathers, and out of Schools; which, as I think, are the proper Store-houses whence to draw our Materials; but with them every thing is *Cant* which doth not suit with their Tunes: those Men would have all Notions of things, manner of Expression and Style, to be but one and the same; but theirs to be the Original for others to go by; which, especially in Men who so highly pretend to Reason, is as unreasonable, as if one would have all features in the Face, all shapes of the Body, all humours and inclinations of the Soul, to be alike; a thing impossible: For every man, saith the Apostle, *hath his proper gift of God; one after this manner, another after that.* However, these great Masters of Wit, Learning and Reason, find fault with the way of other Mens Writing, if it be not as they would have it, that they call Nonsense, and what else they please; for their Tongues and Pens are their own,

Page 4.
16, 18.

1 Cor. 7.
7.

wherewith they will do what they have a mind to. Their Ironical Expressions may well be retorted upon them; yet they should know how Truth is better when naked, and needs no painting as doth Falshood; to Paint is the part of an Harlot, not of a vertuous Woman. I ask Is not Gold, Gold still, and good, tho' it be not Enamel'd, or otherwise curiously wrought? If they have their way of Writing, I have mine, which they shall not put me out of, but will keep to't till I see a Law enjoining others to Conform to theirs: I thank God my ways are different from, and would not change them for theirs, tho' they would set up for Censors and Reformers of other Mens Works, but by what Parent, I cannot hear nor see; and if I could help it, I would have nothing Common with them, because *their Plague is in the Head*; and to give them their due, in what they say there is more of flashy Wit, than of solid and sound Reason; they prefer the Bark before the Body of the Tree, and the Cloaths before the Person who wears them.

They dislike my Quotations or *Fragments* of Scripture, as one of the two calls them; and good reason they have, for they are so many strong and destructive Batteries against them; they would not see the Mouth of that Cannon which shatters their false Opinions to pieces: If to Quote Scripture be a Fault, they are not guilty of it; they travel not much into that Country, and when they do, 'tis with a Cup of Venom in their Hand, if possible to poison the Springs. Their Reason is the God-Idol, for whose sake they slight Revelation; but, saith he, those *Fragments* are ill applied: I see you had more Curiosity than your Brother, (which of the two is *Simeon* and which *Levi*, I cannot tell, however one calls himself a Lay-man) for you read the Book; but what's the reason you give not one Instance of these *Fragments* of Scripture being ill apply'd; surely you are apt enough to take advantage if any was offered, and I cannot believe you would have so much Charity as to spare me; for by the sourness and gall of bitterness which I find in the Letters, I have cause to think so, you cannot so soon have forgotten all those Portions of God's word ill apply'd;

apply'd; I had been glad to have seen some named, then upon a good account I could have said something to you; but you give me cause to think those Misapplying's to be the Man in the Moon, I mean your Humane Reason: As for me, about Matters in question, Scripture is my Strong-hold and the Arsenal whence I draw both offensive and defensive Weapons which they would have us to throw away, but they must pardon us for not complying with them; they themselves cannot and will not do so, for therein they would find their Condemnation: We follow better Examples, those of great Captains in this Warfare, as Paul, who in this same Cause *reasoned out of the Scriptures*, and at another time he *testified concerning Jesus Christ out of the Law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening*. He was not weary of it, neither must we be, let Socinians say what they will to the contrary: And tho' he was immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost, yet on all occasions he appealed to the Scriptures for a confirmation of what he said: Thus when he affirmed that *Christ died for our Sins*, he immediately addeth, *according to Scripture*; and in the 11th Verse he saith, *that he was buried, and that he rose again, still according to the Scriptures*. His Death, Burial and Resurrection, three Articles of our Faith, he proves by Scriptures, which is a Rule laid before us to prove his Divine Nature and Attributes, which we ought to follow, except we think, we about such things know more than the Apostle. And then *Apollos*, whose great Commendation is, that *he was mighty in the Scriptures*, and that *he mightily convinced the Jews publicly, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ*. So if we will convince Socinians that Christ is the true Natural Son of God, we must do't out of Scripture, as out of the same *Apollos* did mightily convince the Jews that *Jesus was Christ*: Besides, we have the Example of a number of People, I mean of *Berea*, said to be more Noble than those of *Thessalonica*, because *they searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things preached to them, were so*. Thus we obey our blessed Saviours Command, to *Search diligently the Scriptures, for they bear testimony of him*: And accordingly when he was with

Acts 17.

2.

Acts 28.

23.

1 Cor. 15.

34.

Acts 18.

24, 28.

Chap. 17.

11.

- Luke 24. 44. with his Disciples, he taught them out of the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms, all things written concerning him, as after his Resurrection he put them in mind of it; then he opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, without which no knowledge of him to be had; and in these Matters the Question is about him, his Person: Besides that, 'tis usual as with Paul and the other Apostles, so with the Evangelists out of Texts of the Old Testament, to prove what they affirmed in the New; nay, in the Old we sometimes find one Prophet quoting some Texts of another; and upon this very account of Sanctifying the Lord of Hosts the Messiah, the Prophet sends the People to the Law and to the Testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them; without it their natural Reason is but Darkness.
- Ila. 8. 20.

I am blamed for using Sundry Metaphors, called, A Flourish of wild Rhetorick; but if it was transplanted into their Garden, it would be Natural enough there, as indeed it would be in its proper center. If sometimes I make use of Metaphors, I wonder why they dislike it; in some respect it may be called a Creature of their own, for they are the Metaphorical Doctors of the World, who make bold to turn almost the whole Scripture into Metaphors, even to set up a Metaphorical God: O Sirs, first pull out the Beam out of your own eye, and then ye shall see clearly to cast out the Mote out of your Brother's. Anon we shall meet with some more Cavils of theirs.

Matt. 7. 5.

They appear at the Bar, whereto indeed they deserve to be called, and Plead for themselves thus: The first of the 39 Articles saith, There is but One living and true God, and in Unity of this Godhead there be Three Persons of one Substance, Power and Eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. As to the latter part, which is the main Question, they pretend to come off with mincing the matter, and say, by some of their late Prints, meaning Socinians, I perceive that they for Peace-sake, submit to the Phrase of the Church, and expressly own Three Persons, tho' they think the word Person not so proper as another word might be. The weight of the words of the Article lieth so heavy upon them, that under it they must either

Pag. 6, 7.

either break or bend; this last they chuse to do, and would seem to yield; not because they believe it, but only for Peace-sake; Peace to themselves, to avoid the Penalty: They think the word *Person* not so proper as another might be; still they reserve a Back-door, why do they not name the word which is in their opinion more proper than that of *Person*? that word remains in *posse* in their Breast, till there be a fair occasion to declare it. Their speaking of Peace is well, if with it they join Truth, for they ought not to be a slander; no Christian is to betray Truth for Peace-sake. Now if a Person of the Godhead be described as it is by an incommunicable Subsistence of the Divine Essence, the *Socinian* shall not be acquitted as he pretends: It is not my work, neither is this a place to shew how frivolous that Plea would prove at the Bar of the Law; but I am sure in my Book I sufficiently demonstrated it to be a vain Subterfuge and against the Gospel.

That trimming Spirit in them, which, because they have not the upper hand, one may easily perceive to Rule throughout in both Letters, puts me in mind of the Popish Methods in such Cases, as among other Instances it appears by what passed in 1561, in that great Assembly at *Poissy* in France, which the then French King *Charles IX.* appointed to meet, and in his Presence therein to have free Conference about Religion, between some of the *Popish* Clergy and some of the *Protestant* Ministers: Because as yet things were not ripe for their Designs, they by means of those Conferences would try whether some way might be found out to plaister things over, and for the present to compose Differences; in order thereunto, after some discourses about the Sacraments, which between the Cardinal of *Lorraine* and *Theodorus Beza* had happened in the K. of *Navarre's* Chamber, where they met accidentally; the *Popish* Party being not willing to venture their Cause upon Disputes, first by the Doctors of *Sorbon*, and lastly by the Cardinal of *Tournon* in the name of the whole Clergy, desired the King and Queen-Mother to give the *Protestants* no Hearing, who by the Mouth of *Beza* had already made a Speech in the Assembly, and given an account of their Confession
of

of Faith: So then these Publick Conferences not doing the work, they did set up Private ones; first between Two and Two, then between Five and Five of both Religions, and among these for the Protestants *Peter Martyr* was one; the Point was about the *Lord's Supper*: On the Popish side the design was, not to find out the Truth, but only such words as each side might Interpret on his behalf: To that purpose several Formules, which here I need not to insert, were by the Papists offered the Protestants, but being ambiguous, captious, and such as might be understood in a double sense, *Beza* for Conclusion said, *We must say all or nothing*, because indeed the Mystery of that Holy Sacrament must be explained. The like was practised in their Council of *Trent*, where happened great Heats between the *Dominicans* and *Franciscans* about several Points, wherein they differ, but to displease neither side, their Canons about those Matters, before they were passed, they shewed to both Parties, and penn'd them in such Words and Expressions, as each side might favourably Interpret for his own Opinion.

Thus *Socinians* would follow the same way, and admit of such words as may be taken in their Sense and ours too; yet tho' we should agree about the Terms, they know we do not in the Signification; *they for Peace sake submit to the Phrase of the Church, and own Three Persons*, yet Interpret it not as the Church doth; Again, *They seem desirous to wash their hands of Socinianism*, yet defend it as much as they are able: Upon the prudent Explication which hath been given of some obnoxious Terms, they weave the Dispute and come in as Brethren, yet still believe not as the Church doth; nay, if we will believe them, we are all of a perfect Agreement; but if we examine it will be found, if by these pretended last Concessions of theirs we agree, 'tis about some Words, when the difference about Things still remains. And as then Papists were only to have things quiet for the present, so I perceive *Socinians* are now content it should be so between us, to see whether Times may happen to turn for them, then indeed they would declare, by the word *Person* they mean not an Incommunicable Subsistence of the Godhead, but only an

An Attribute as Wisdom, Love: that Christ is God and Son of God by Favour not by Nature and by eternal Generation. But all such Trimmers, to speak in *Job's* Words, are *Physicians* of no value, and such Remedies cannot cure the Wound but it will break out again, and thus I call *daubing with untempered Mortar*, 'tis not enough to ease of the Pain, but the cause must be removed, which is the only way to cure for certain, and to prevent Relapses: this I bring in to shew how *Socinians* are not so averse from such *Papish* Practices as they pretend to be; and if we narrowly inquire into it, we shall find they are willing to join with them in the Practice of the following Maxim, where they are the weakest, they first pretend for Moderation and Toleration, then for an Equality, afterwards struggle for Superiority, and at last destroy any one that to a hairs Breadth would not come up to what they would have: for as *Papists* brag of a Spirit of Infallibility intailed upon their Church, so *Socinians* are of opinion that the Spirit of God, (if they own any such thing) is departed from other Christian Societies only to be among them, who look upon themselves as the only true Interpreters of God's Word, as *Socinus* doth applaud himself in his new fangled Expositions, therefore they despise all Antient Doctors of the Primitive Church, and I think, in *Tertullian's* Words against *Montanus*, we may say it to be the *Socinians* opinion, *Truth waited for their Coming, without which it had been quite lost*: yet according to their Principles we must all be Scepticks and *Pyrrhonians* always doubting of every thing and never sure of any, then in the Word of God is no Truth that we can be certain of: we know no Man hath dominion over the Faith of another, nor ought to impose his Opinion upon others, neither could they who went before us be Masters of our Faith, nor we of the Faith of those who are to come after. You see I make use of your own Expressions, but withal I must tell you that if any one would in former or present times offer to force things of their own upon us to believe, we would reject it, by their own, we mean any thing different from or contrary to the Word of God, 'tis not their offering to us, or of us to others, can bind the Consciences, but the things offered do, if they be the Word of God: no human Authority doth *per se* and of it self tye my Conscience, but God's Word doth, therefore if any thing be proposed as an Article of Faith, we must see whether it

Job 13. 4.

be contained in the Word of God, which bears Record of it self, and so stands in no need of the Testimony of Man: 'tis not the hand that gives Alms which can make Gold to be Gold or Silver to be Silver, nor the Lawyers quoting the Law that can make it to be Law, 'tis so in it self, so is Gospel Gospel in it self, without any human help, or else you make the Gloss and Interpretation more than the Text, and as according to your Principles you may alter your Interpretation one to day and another different from it the next, what a Confusion would you leave us in, when you are so fickle and cannot agree with your own selves? as indeed you make an Alteration in the Questions from what they were in *Socinus's* days.

By what they say of Doctrines which according to circumstance of times may be convenient or inconvenient, I find them inclined to blame the times to excuse themselves: but the Faults which too often are committed, the Times are not to be accused of but the Malice or Weakness of Men, there being no Season so troublesome as can keep a good Judge from doing Justice, or a good Divine from giving a good Interpretation of Scripture, so Mens Faults ought to be chastised, and not the Times, which are as Men govern themselves, to be complained of; but good and holy Laws ought to be enacted by those whom it belongs to, having the Glory of God, and the Good of the People before their Eyes: new Distempers require new Remedies, and new Laws are necessary against new Crimes, wherefore I lay hold on this new occasion, and once more make bold, to both Houses of Parliament, humbly to commend the Cause of God, and of his Son the Lord Jesus, (according as I formerly besought them in my Epistle) in earnest to mind it, or else with *David* I say, *Arise O God plead thine own Cause.*

Psal. 74.

22.

However, as to Faith and Practice, they give a good Character of themselves; as to the first, they believe all the Articles of the Apostles Creed, but still they reserve unto themselves to give what Interpretation they please; but sure we are, 'tis not that contained in the *Nicene* and *Athenasian* Creeds: Still there is a Jesuitical Juggling, Equivocation, and Mental Reservation. Ask them which is the true sense of the Words in Jesus Christ *his only Son*, they will not say, 'tis of his own Nature and Substance and from Eternity; which Creed, say they, *was heretofore brought a full and sufficient Summary of Faith,* til

till some Men perverted the true and Orthodox Meaning, and brought false Glosses upon't, contrary to the plain and natural Interpretation received by the Universal Church; then indeed to refute unbound and Anti-scriptural Expositions and wresting of the true Sense, to explain and enlarge was found necessary: *'Tis their Principle thankfully to lay hold on the Message of Redemption by Jesus Christ:* This seems fair, but is very defective; for according to them, Christ came into the World as a bare Messenger, a meer Man, to declare the Will of God unto us, which others, tho not so fully and plainly, had done before, to die only for our good, but not in our stead, nor to purchase us by the Merits of his Death: So they say the Lord Jesus is God by Favour, not by Nature, robbing him thus of his Divinity. When we seriously come to the matter, they are full of Quibblings and Cavils: As to the receiving the Message of Redemption, 'tis according to them by Strength of Reason and not of Faith; for no true Faith in Christ, except Men believe him to be true God as well as true Man. As to *Practice*, this Character they give of themselves, *They fear God, walk humbly before him, hold no Correspondence with any known Sin, &c.* This is well, but not enough; for the moral Virtues of the Heathen carryed some of them as far as this: But a sound Knowledge in the Mind is required, and no sound saving Knowledge of Christ, except one knows him for such as he is, that is, God and Man, or else he is but half a Christ, an imperfect Mediatour; whole Christ is the true Object of Faith. *These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God,* as well as the Son of Man.

John 20,
31.

I am glad to find something like the Matters in question; in the first Letter we are told what ground they go upon concerning their Opinions; Scripture they own to be the Rule of Faith, but unto themselves they reserve the Interpretation, which is as bad as what they condemn in *Papists*, to depend upon the Authority of their own Interpretation, and so can turn it which way they please; so may every *Socinian*, as well as every *Quaker*, have their private Interpretation: but to say that *Protestants* for the interpretation of Scripture *do rely upon their own Reason*, is without warrant and doth not consist with Truth, except by Protestants they mean Socinians: if this were a fit place I could shew that they have not the same

243. 6, 8

pag. 11.

Acts 27.3.

Matth. 16.
17.John 14.
16, 17.Chap. 16.
13, 14.2 Tim. 1.
7.Psal 119.
169.

regard as we, for Scriptures, tho they assert it, for they dispute the Truth and Authority thereof: but I must come to *human Reason*, which in one page is twice asserted to be *the only Guide God hath given us in matters of Religion*, for under that head I reduce the three he there mentioneth about Revelation: but this is not the Judgment of true Protestants; if a Man hath no other Guide but his own Reason, 'tis a blind one and very defective, 'tis but one part of three and the least too; for to the end that human Reason may be a fit Guide, it must be first subordinate to Revelation, which is the prescribed Rule and from which it ought not to recede no more than a Judge from the Law, (as Paul told *Ananias*) or else he is in danger of falling into Precipices, that's the Light it must follow, and as the Soul is guided by Reason, so must Reason be by Revelation: neither can Reason and outward Revelation do the Work without inward Revelation, whereby Reason is supernaturally endowed, and this is Faith a Gift of God: this is the ground of our Blessed Saviour's giving his Father thanks for revealing the Mysteries of Faith and Salvation unto Babes, that is, those who as yet in his Sense were not capable of Reason, and plainly tells *Peter* that if he knew and confessed him to be the Son of the living God, *Flesh and Blood*, or his natural Reason, had not revealed it unto him, but his Father which is in Heaven; When the Lord Jesus was upon leaving this World, he promised his Disciples a Guide, what their own Reason? no such thing, but the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, who should teach them all things, and bring to remembrance whatsoever he had said unto them, and he was to abide with them for ever: this Spirit of God is the right Guide whom true Protestants own to lead and guide us in the way of Salvation; and this he doth not according to human Fancies or private Inspirations, but according to the Rule of the Word, for saith our Saviour, *he shall receive of mine*, that is my Word, and shall show it unto you, for he shall not speak of himself, he teaches and applies the Word, and his working is by the Apostle called *the Spirit of a sound Mind*, which God hath given us; so that a sound Mind, an Orthodoxy in the Faith is an Effect of God's Gift, not of our Reason or of any thing else in us, wherefore David saith *give me Understanding according to thy Word*. But these things Socinians have been told over and over, and in the Preface and latter end

of my Book I think I said enough to satisfie unbiassed Persons; so have others too: this is the sure and infallible Guide which God hath given us, and not any human Authority different from or contrary to it; the *Pope* we cannot own for he is a Party and sets up for himself; nor the antient Writers, if they deviate from the Rule, but 'tis a good Argument for the things wherein they follow it: Men must not be so selfish and wilful as to despise others who may have the Spirit of God as well as themselves, and being Witnesses of those Times are able to inform us how things stood in their time, and cannot be partial for this wherein we live.

The Author of the first Letter hath a touch upon the matter and that's all: 'tis about the interpretation of what *S. John* saith, *the Word was made Flesh*, I confess there is a great difference in the interpretation, we say according to the natural Signification, *the Word* or Son of God took upon him our human Nature; they say $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omega\varsigma$ which we translate *the Word*, signifies Reason rather than Word, and they infer that the Reason or Wisdom of God was communicated unto Jesus Christ; this is a very much forced Interpretation and fetch'd afar off, for all along *the Word* is spoken of as a Subject, and they would make a shift to turn it into the Predicate. Now what shall we do, of these two Opinions to find out the true one? for if every Person or Party be allowed such a Latitude as to interpret things after their own Fancy, there will be no end of false Glosses and wrong Interpretations: how doth the Goldsmith do to know true Gold or Silver from that which is false? he brings it to the Touch-stone, so must we in this case; between them and us is a Difference, the Party must not be the Judge, 'tis not just they should be Judges in their own cause, nor we in ours: then we must agree about a Judge, such as is impartial and infallible, and none but God is such: now God doth not immediatly speak from Heaven, for he doth it in his Word, that is his Will and ought to be our Law and Rule: in matters of Faith I will believe no Man's Assertion, except out of Scripture he proves it to me, the like he may justly expect from me; but in case of that Text of Scripture he and I give different Interpretations, what's to be done? we ought still to keep in the same Court, and wait for a Decision from the same Judge; then I must prove my Interpretation by some other place of Scripture or else he must not believe me,

pag. 8.

2 Tim. 3.
16.

me, nor I him except he doth the like: and if Men will but lay aside Prejudices, and be acted by a real and sincere desire to find out the Truth, God will not leave them, but therein afford such Helps as shall answer their Good; *for all Scripture is given by Inspiration of Gods, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfect.*

1 John 1, 2.

Now let us come to our Point, and reduce the Rule to a Practice; the Question is, Whether by *the Word* is meant a Person as we say, or a *Quality* as they would have it? there is a great Difference between Persons and Things; now to find out the Truth, this Text must be compared with others, we need not to go far, for in the first Verse of the Chapter we read thrice the same Name: in the beginning *was the Word* (was, signifieth existed, had a Being, which relateth to a Person, and not to a Thing) *the same Word was with God and was God*; what? a Quality with God and a Thing God? doth the Evangelist begin his Gospel in so high a strain only to tell us how Reason was in the beginning, how Reason was with God, and Reason was God, or in plain Words that God was Reasonable, which is a Truth known to every one, so no need to tell it, but he would acquaint the Readers with things before unknown to them; besides doth this hold any proportion with the Nature and Excellency of the Gospel and great Tidings of Salvation? this indeed is to exalt Reason, and because they make a God of their Reason, therefore for Name's sake Reason must be deified: then, according to their Principle, this Reason must be an efficient Cause of all, *for all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made*; to create and make things is the Property and Act of a Person, and not of a Thing, *in him*, as in a Person and not as in a Thing, *was Life*; and the same Apostle calls him *the Word of Life*, that Life which was manifested, and *that Eternal Life which was with the Father first, and then was manifested unto us*; as if he had said, the living God, according to an usual way of speaking in Scripture, when the Abstract is put for the Concrete, thus God is called *the Lord our Righteousness*: that same Word that was God, was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, to dwell denotes a Person; and we beheld his Glory, not the Glory of Reason or Wisdom, but the Glory

Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, here is a Relation of a Son to a Father, and surely a Son is a Person not a Thing; and of this same John bare witness of him, saying this was he of whom I spake, he that cometh after me is preferred before me, read on till ver. 19. all along the Word is spoken as of a Person, and in ver. 17. he declares who that Word is by a Comparison between Persons, the Law was given by Moses; but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. This Jesus Christ he hath been speaking of all this while, and his Design is to shew that Jesus Christ is the Word so often by him mentioned, and to that effect he speaks of John's Evidence about him. If the Word be a Thing and not a Person, Christ was so, and so Moses who was a Person, and Christ after he was made Flesh is compared to him: O the Perverseness of some Mens Judgment! who read Scripture, not to find out Truth or be guided by it, but out of it to wrest some things to support their Prejudices: Papists, to set up the Pope's Supremacy, think after much seeking to have found a Text to serve their turn, *he that is spiritual judgeth all things,* yet *he himself is judged of no Man*, with them the Pope is that Spiritual Man: the Socinians, whose Design is not to set up one, as Papists do, but to pull down and destroy the great Work of Incarnation, say, because it serves their turn, no Word or Divine Person, but only the Reason of God was made Flesh. Out of what I have said I think it plainly appears how the Scope of the Place, and the Design of the Evangelist is to speak of a Person and not of a Thing.

1 Cor. 2.

15.

But to prove our Interpretation, let us further search into Scriptures. Paul speaks to our purpose, for as John saith the Word that was God was made Flesh, so he declares that God was manifest in the Flesh, which he calls the great Mystery of Godliness, and the whole Verse, tho in different Branches, as preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the World, received up into Glory, do plainly demonstrate the Lord Jesus to be that God or Person of the Godhead manifest in the Flesh: and in another Place he saith, *when the Fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman*: that Person which in another place is called God, in this is called the Son of God, and in another God's own Son or proper Son: in these several Texts mention is made of an Incarnation, or of being made Flesh, manifest in the Flesh, made of a Woman,

1 Tim. 3

16.

Gal. 4. 4.

Rom. 8.

32.

Woman, and God sent his own Son in the *Likeness of sinful Flesh*; and the Subject is called the *Word*, *God*, *Son of God*, *God's own* and *proper Son*: is there in all this any Metaphor, or any Ground to say that the Word made Flesh signifieth Reason communicated to Jesus? all this proves ~~that~~ our Interpretation is according to the Analogy of Faith, and shews a sweet Harmony of several Texts of Scripture, to demonstrate the adorable Mystery of the Incarnation of the Son God.

Thus far we proved our Interpretation of that Text of Scripture, we do not perceive they are in a Condition to do the like for theirs, for if they could we should hear of it, they have not one Text to do it: *Magister dixit* is no Reason with us, the *Unitarian* may say, but that is not enough, what he saith he must prove, upon true Grounds and to the purpose: well, for want of Scripture the Author of the Letter gives a Reason of his own, which is this, *And we all know that Divine Wisdom may be communicated to Man without the Incarnation of God*: Did ever any one read such a pitiful coming off in so weighty a matter as this is? how sawey with God are some Men in the World, in setting out their foolish and wandering Fancies, and where is a due Respect for his Holy Word? hath not God made foolish the Wisdom of these Men, if ever they had any? doth this Interpretation hold any proportion with that high and noble Idea which the Evangelist would give us of the Person whose History he writes? first of all we defy them to shew that this is the Sense of any Text concerning this Matter? *Secondly*, suppose they could, yet it being against the usual Meaning, they ought to shew reason why in this place it should be taken otherwise, and then must such a silly Reason weigh down the Authority of so many Texts of Scripture? what will become of all the glorious Attributes and Privilege of the Lord Jesus over Angels and Men? what of that Name which is above every Name, *God's own, only begotten Son* in whom he is well pleased, if all comes only to this, God's Reason and Wisdom were communicated to him, which God in a high degree did to *Solomon*, and to others of his eminent Servants, whereby he must make them equal with his Son and he with them: we all know that God, if he pleases, can create another World, must we conclude therefore he hath not created this; God, if he had pleased, could have delivered his People out of *Egypt*.

Egypt otherwise than by the hand of *Moses*, must we say therefore he delivered them not by his hand? Out of what God can do we must not infer that he hath not done what he hath done; because God can communicate Reason to Man, therefore the Word the Son of God was not made Flesh: Ye great Logicians, is this a good Consequence, *risum tenetis*, I could almost say, if the thing in question was not of the highest importance.

Before I leave this Point, I shall skip over to another place of the Letter; for tho' he there speaks not to me, but to another, whose Notions I am not concerned for, yet what he saith relating to the Cause, I ought to take notice of, the more because it belongs to that Text of *John*, which hitherto we were upon; 'tis said, *The Incarnation of God is no where expressed in Scripture, it can be no more than merely a deduction from thence.* 'Tis well you are so kind, as to grant 'tis in't in some way: As to the first part, if you say in so many Letters, according to your cavilling way, we know't; for the word Incarnation is Latin, and so none of the Books of Scripture being originally written in that Language, we must not think to find it in't, but we say a word altogether equivalent, and which signifies the same thing is in't: Doth not to *be made Flesh* and to be incarnate, being made Flesh and Incarnation, signify the same? May be you will deny it, 'tis but what some of yours do in a thing of the like nature, as that to *make* and to *create* the World, signify not the same thing: If the *Word*, which as *S. John* saith, *was God*, was made Flesh, I think, that according to all Rules of Logick, out of those Premises we may conclude, how God was incarnate or made Flesh, and that Act we may well call Incarnation. As to the other part, that it is only by Deduction, you cannot be ignorant how there are such Deductions as are equivalent or next to the Expression; for when the chief Assertion contained in Scripture is true, so must also be whatsoever is therein included, and in the Explication of it drawn by a true and right Consequence. Thus, tho' in the *Sixth Commandment*, to give one Poyson be not expressed,

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yet by a true and certain Consequence, 'tis deduced out of these Words, *Thou shalt not kill*; so starving one to death is adjudged Murther, and punished as such: Tho Incest be not exprest in the *Seventh*, yet none will deny it to be forbidden under these Words, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*; so is Fornication; and so of every other Precept wherein when a Sin is forbidden, all of the same kind are so, and also the Virtue contrary to the Sin is prescribed: And tho there were some difference in the Nature of the thing, yet hence we infer this certain Truth, that tho some things be not expressly set down in Scripture, yet are therein contained, and thence deduced by a true and lawful Consequence: Of this sort are the words Trinity and Incarnation; and if the Names, then also the Things; for the Use of Words is to signify Things.

As to what is added in Answer to the Assertion, that the Son of God was made Man, how the *Unitarian* will say, *The Son of God doth not always signify God*, 'tis thereby implied that sometimes it doth, and that grants what we desire; for thus we know, that when it is simply and absolutely attributed to Christ, which is never so to any Angel or Man, we may conclude, that then it necessarily signifies God. As to what is answered to the other Text, *The Word was made Flesh*; that *the Word* doth not plainly signify God, I only say this, how *John* saith *the word was God*, I leave them in his hands, and let them come off as they can: As to the Third Text, *the Unitarian* will say, what he said before; That God may be manifest in the Flesh without being incarnate; he may say what he pleases if he proves nothing, nay, not so much as go about it; surely they claim a Priviledge to be believed in what they say upon their bare word; but seeing they give no reason for what they say, we may suppose those great Masters of Reason have none to give, their Reason fails them, and is succeeded by Passion; I see they found out a short way to answer all Arguments against them, either with not taking notice of them, and thus they answer my Book, or with denying every thing without giving any

any Reason for it : This puts me in mind of a common Saying when I was in the *Philosophy* School, *Plus negabis minus quam probabis Philosophus*. The dullest Fellow in the World can deny more, than the greatest Philosopher is able to prove ; do but always deny, and at last the Philosopher will have nothing to say : There is no arguing against those who deny Principles ; now this is a great one for Men to give Reason as for what they affirm, so for what they deny ; this is the part of Rational Men : We attack them out of Scripture, and they ought in our way to answer us out of the same, as their School-Arguments we answer in their way.

But to return to what the Unitarian saith, that *The Son of God* doth not always signify God, I say 'tis not always necessary to our purpose it should : And to state the Question well, these two things ought to be observed : *First*, The Question is not at all about Angels or Men, but about the Person of the Lord *Jesus* : *The Second*, The Name *God* is not improperly taken. This being premised, I say, how the words *Son of God* when spoken of Christ, do signify God ; which to prove out of many Texts, I shall bring only two in *S. John's* Gospel, and if in the whole Bible there was but one, yet it would be sufficient, for every word therein is Truth ; and if once the Holy Ghost therein declares the Son of God to signify God, 'tis not in the power of Men or Devils to make it otherwise : Besides that, the two Texts are so plain, that there is no ground left to Cavil : The first place is about the Interpretation given some words spoken by our blessed Lord, whereby, said the Jews, *thou makest thy self God*, which our Saviour rendered by these, *I said I am the Son of God*. So that the words *God*, *Son of God*, signify just the same : The Question between our Lord and the Jews, was not about the meaning of what he had said, they were agreed about it ; but the Dispute was, whether those words were Blasphemy ? which they affirmed, and he denied. Those words in question spoken by our Saviour are in ver. 30. *I and my Father are One*, which because they are most material to the Question, I shall thereupon observe this, How therein *Christ* expresses Two Persons, Himself and the Father ; the word I

John 10.
33, 36.

John 14.
10.

Chap. 11.

he explains by the name *Son*, I said I am the Son of God; and as by the first words of the Verse, he makes a distinction of Persons, so by the last he affirms a Oneness between Him and the Father, when he saith they are *One*. This Oneness cannot be of a Personality, which already he hath distinguished; what else then can it be but in Nature, and consequently in the Attributes thereunto belonging. With this Text is to be compared the other, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me*. It is very idle and frivolous for them to think they are *One* only in Will and Consent; for if our Saviour's meaning had been only so and no farther, the *Jews* would never have branded it with Blasphemy, nor offered to have stoned him for it; they well knew, how by their Law no Man could be guilty of Blasphemy for saying his Will and Consent was one with God's, for they were commanded to conform their Will and Mind to the Will of God, that thereby might be a perfect agreement between their God and them; between his Law and their Obedience: Therefore to make this in their opinion to be Blasphemy, there must be something of another nature, which they declare plainly enough, *because that thou being a Man, makest thy self God*. So the Question came to this, Whether the Lord Jesus was God? Which the *Jews* denied, as now *Socinians* do; but our Lord affirmed, as after him we do; whence we conclude he is, because he said so; which if he were not, he had asserted a Lye, spoken Blasphemy, and the *Jews* had been in the Right; but seeing he said he was the Son of God, he spoke the Truth, which *Socinians* denying, they bring the Lye and Blasphemy upon themselves, and as good as say, as the *Jews* did to Pilate, *He ought to die because he made himself the Son of God*, John 19 7. The other Text to prove how the Name *Son of God* when spoken of Christ, signifies God, is this; *Lazarus's Sickness was for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby*: We may see how the word *God* is explained by that of *Son of God*: So that whether the name *God* be taken Essentially or Personally, still the Person of the Son is God, for therein is but One Glory of God and of the Son of God,

God, the Father is glorified in the Son; if they have one equal and common Glory, then they have a common and equal Nature; for we know the true and eternal Almighty God hath said, *My Glory will I not give to another.* Isa. 42. 8.

In my Book I at large have asserted this Divine Filiation of the Lord Jesus, with the manner of it; and thereunto expected an Answer, if they had been willing and able to give it. That Divine and Proper Sonship and his Godhead, *John* in several places of his Gospel and Epistles, both as his own belief and in the very words of our blessed Lord, in those Comparisons which he so often makes between himself and the Father, lays it so clear, that for an unprejudiced mind there is no ground left to doubt of it; the Pronoun possessive *My* in the Singular number, joined with *Father*, which so frequently he makes use of, doth denote the Singular Nature of his Sonship, and distinguish it from every other Kind: I shall mention only what, when he was but Twelve Years old, upon the occasion of his being found in the Temple asking the Doctors of the Law Questions, and *Mary* having said, *Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us?* He answered, *Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?* The meaning of which they understood not, as the Evangelist observes, he thereby signified another kind of Filiation than what had any relation to *Mary*: As according to the Flesh he was her true and proper Son, because begotten of her own Substance, so in relation to the Spirit and Deity, he is God's own and proper Son, because begotten of the Substance of the Father: If there be any such, (as certainly there is, and in the Chapter about his Eternal Generation I sufficiently proved it) then ye *Sacrians* cannot deny the Lord Jesus to be He; and if he be not the proper Son of the Father, as the Apostle affirms he is, then God the Father is not properly a Father; for the works of Grace do not properly make one a Father, but it must be the work of Nature, of Humane in Men, of Divine in God; Humane Nature may receive some Divine Gifts, but only thus much as it is capable of, within certain bounds and degrees, or else it were to make Humanity to be Deity: But *Christ*
bath

Luke 2.
47. 50.

Coloss. 2.
9.

hath not the Spirit by Measure, or by Grace, but by Nature and Infinitely in him, which no Finite being, such is every Creature, is capable of; the reason is, because in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Thus he must necessarily be God primarily, and not derivatively, or in part only; for Divine Nature is indivisible, either wholly God, with all Attributes of the Godhead, or no God at all; No Creature, Man, Angel, or Arch-Angel, can have all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him, because none of them is the Infinite God: But since all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in the Person of Christ, he must needs be God Infinite; for all this fulness of the Godhead is a fulness of Nature, of the Essential Attributes of that same Nature, of Immensity, Power, Eternity, and of any thing else proper to that Nature: If in the whole Word of God there was no other Text but this to prove the Godhead of our Saviour, it were sufficient to do't, it being so positive, so full, and so plain: *All* is an Absolute word, to be taken without any restriction or limitation whatsoever: *All Fulness*, What more can be said? *Of the Godhead*, What more Divine and Expressive?

But what upon the matter remains in the same place is this, *Whether a God, and a God, and a God, do not amount to more than One God?* To take the thing as I ought, and not as some others do, I say that your Arithmetick in this doth fail and deceive you; wherefore believe Revelation before your Reason, which indeed may tell you how in humane and finite things One, One and One make Three; but Revelation, which contradicteth not it self, calls the Father God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God; the same also saith there is but One God: A Divine Nature common to Three Persons, doth imply Three Persons, but no more than One God, which is One Divine Nature subsisting in Three Persons and Three Persons existing in One Nature: Must I with Scripture conclude, that Father, Son and Holy Ghost are but One God, or with your Arithmetick and Reason, that they are Three Gods; make but your Reason first agree with Revelation, and then you and I shall agree; so
that

that the Dispute is more between your Reason and Scripture than between you and me: But surely with me Gods Word is of greater Authority than your Reason; ye must not suffer your Reason, that *Ignis fatuus*, to wander from the Rule: Do you know what Solomon Prov. 28. saith, *He that trusteth in his own heart is a Fool*; if you 26. know it not, I tell you and your Partner, he speaks to you when he saith, *Cause from thine own Wisdom*, or Reason. Chap. 23.

Now having done with this, I must go back where I left; and there shall find things of another nature, you call *Enemies to the common Rights and Liberties of Humane Nature*. Those who permit not every one a free liberty to make Interpretations and Inferences for themselves from Scriptures, and this you ground on a false Supposition, that *Both the Word of God and the best means of understanding it, are Originally and Uncontrollably given to every Man*: For Scripture and Experience convince us, that every Man hath not the Word nor Means to understand it, and therefore is neither Originally nor Uncontrollably given to every Man; this is a truth which elsewhere I made good, and shall, by Gods grace, be ready again to do upon occasion: But besides that it would require some time, this is no place to do't, and I ever avoid going from the Question: However, this I say, that ye go upon a Principle destructive to Order, if every one must be allowed to believe and profess what he pleases, tho' never so Heretical, and to the disturbance of a Settlement made by a Lawful Authority, and to promote it in Discourse, Conversation, Printing, Publishing, and such other ways as ye Gentlemen *Socinians* are forward to do, what security for the Articles of our Religion as by Law established: We must be governed by an uncertain Tide; this Year of one Mind and Religion, the next, as occasion is offered, of another; and those who now are the undermost in Power, and so much plead for a freedom of Opinions and Religion in the greatest latitude, if once they had the upper hand, they would alter their Tune, and turn Blasphemy and Idolatry upon the Orthodox for setting up a meer Man for a God, and worshipping him:

As

In 1565.
and 1660.

As long as they want Power they are for Moderation, but ye are ruled by a Spirit which might soon happen to make you turn Moderation into Persecution, as all Enemies to Christ are apt to do. Socinians were not twice banished out of Poland, where they were grown strong, and turned out of other places for nothing; 'tis but prudence to tie your Hands and bind you to your good Behaviour; if ye are so busie when not supported by the Magistrates, what would ye be if once you had gotten the Power in your own hand; untuly Horses must have Curbs put upon them: Will not a general Toleration, and for every Man in the Land about Religion, introduce Confusion? That must not be, if it were only for Order sake; for as the greatest part of the World is the worst of it, so Idolatry, Blasphemy, and all manner of Heresy, must be look'd for at one time or other; and are ye not of opinion, that Confusion in Church might pass into the State, for ye would not be bound with any thing: No doubt ye would be very angry if the *Parliament* would either revive old or enact new Penal Laws against you: How far you would give the Magistrate leave to meddle in Matters of Religion we cannot well tell, tho' by the Title of the Book you commend to our reading *about the Power of the Magistrate and the Rights of Mankind in Matters of Religion*, which I being in the Country cannot see for the present, yet we must suppose it to favour your Principles, or else you would not commend it as you do.

pag. 39.

p. 6. 13.

And as you would not have the Magistrates to meddle far in Matters of Religion, nor to punish Hereticks, which was one of *Donatus* his Errors; so by what you say, you have no very good opinion of a *Convocation*, which yet we look upon to be the most competent Judge we have about those Matters: We agree with you how the *Convocation* which made the *Articles*, *Service-Book*, and *Homilies*, was an Assembly of Doctors and Clergy-men that were Fallible; but for all that Fallibility, many of them were Men of great Piety and Parts; and as no Infallibility is to be found in this World, next to that, I think the Nation was happy at that time to have Persons so well qualified for the Work:

Work: And ye are much mistaken, to say they en-acted their Opinions into Articles, for the Articles of our Faith are not Mans Opinions, they extracted them out of the Word of God, which supplied them with the Materials, only they disposed it into the best Order they thought fit, as God enabled them: After this rate you attempt to give our Religion a fatal blow; you would have us to pin our Faith on Mens Sleeves and Opinions, so they might lawfully be repealed this Year, the next, or at any time: Thus if *Papery* under King *James* had prevailed, we had quite been at a loss, our Articles had been declared Heretical, (tho' if we measure them according to the Rule of God's Word, they are as sound as any can be) and our Religion in some sense had been lost, and we put to seek for and set up another: But I say, that tho' the whole *Papish*, false Christian and *Mahometan* World, should condemn them, yet still they would be True and Orthodox, not because they were formed by a *Convocation*, but because they are collected out of God's Word the Rule of Truth: Suppose *Socinians* here had the upper hand, which I hope I shall never live to see, then they would get a *Convocation* of their own to wrest and turn our Articles into their Channel, and for all their plea for a private Interpretation, they would set up a publick one of their own, and like another Council of *Arimini*, which revoked what that of *Nice* had done before against *Arians*, have an Assembly to Condemn, or at least to give our laid Articles their *Socinian* Interpretation. As to what you say, that a future Clergy may repeal and declare against the present Articles; I answer, God forbid that ever he should be so angry against the Nation as to suffer such a thing to be brought upon the Stage, but in case it was, I say, it might happen that such a *Convocation* could repeal, that is, have a Power, but it might not, that is, should have no right to do't; I can, but may not kill a Man.

I shall not trouble my self with discovering the Rottenness of your Principles about these things, for that you do your selves, when you say that People may alter their minds, and so their Religion; so one to day a *Socinian*, may, if he thinks fit, to morrow be

2 Tim. 1.
25.

a true Christian, and you give this for a reason, *A Man cannot foresee what will come to pass, and so a Doctrine which at one time may be convenient, may be otherwise when Circumstances of Time shall alter*: So now, when Socinians are undisturbed, it is convenient for them to be what they are; but if the Circumstances of Time should alter, then for Conveniency sake they might alter too, to avoid Fire and Faggot, if they were in danger of it: This Policy never enter'd into the Heart of Martyrs; but after this Principle, yours is a time-serving and unstable Religion, one may alter from the worse to the better; 'tis well and good, and happy ye, *If God peradventure will give you repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth of Christ*, and not holding it in Unrighteousness. This Principle of yours for Fickleness and Changeableness in Religion, you would demonstrate, and may be justify, out of what you say, *All the Subscriptions of the Clergy to the Predestinarian-Doctrine contained in the Articles and Homilies, hath not preserved them from contrary Sentiments, such as, when Van Halman first broached them, were universally judged to be contrary to the Doctrine of the Church of England*. I like, in a thing that cannot be denyed, to see you own the Truth, how Arminianism is contrary to the Articles, Homilies, and Doctrine of the Church of England. Thus, *Habemus fatentem reum*; why then, ye, who pretend to be Members of the Church, do you profess Doctrines contrary to hers, and all along declare for them? I see you will not stop there, but infer, that as the Clergy of the Church, contrary to their Subscriptions, are departed from the Doctrine. I call it the true, about Predestination to fall into Arminianism, so they may embrace Socinianism, as you say, the majority now doth, and so successively and by degrees pass into any other Heresie; for which you give this reason, *Men cannot help the altering of their Minds*: This truly and properly is the Religion of Libertinism, and Atheism is the next step: So Men may plainly see what a kind of Religion you are striving for, and would bring us into. To what hath been laid about Convocations, this I shall add, that though
ye

ye seem to slight a Convocation, yet let me tell you, pag 30.
either in Quality or Number 'tis no despicable Body,
it being the Representative of a considerable part of
the Nation; and 'tis hoped from the Piety and Wis-
dom of the Parliament, that in Matters of Religion,
upon occasion they will not despise their Advice and
Address.

In the Disputes about Socinians and us, we are a-
greed to be judged by the Word of God; yet they
dislike our making use of it against them, too much
as they think; but this Gentleman, who in the be-
ginning of his Letter complains of my numerous Quo-
tations of Scripture Phrases, as he calls it, hath ta-
ken effectual care to avoid giving me cause to com-
plain of the like against him; for in the whole Letter
there is but one Quotation, just at the latter end of
it, and 'tis usher'd in with this Christian Preamble,
*The ill-natur'd turn of your Title-Page, and the mali-
cious and persecuting design of your Preface, convinced
me, that (if we may believe our Saviour Christ) you
know neither the Father nor the Son; this is what we
call To beat a Man with his own Weapons, his own
he hitherto used to little purpose, at last he resolv'd
to try whether the same I made use of against him,
would do his Work; but he is so unskilful in hand-
ling of it, that 'twill not serve his end, but is against
rather than for him: He saith to me, If we may be-
lieve our Saviour Christ, the if may well be turned a-
gainst you; out of another Mans Pen it were not
questionable, as 'tis out of yours; I wish you would
believe him as we do, when he absolutely, and with-
out any limitation, doth call himself the Son of God;
as some times they wrest his Words, so here they
would make him say, that I know neither the Father
nor his Son, whereupon he quoteth this Text, They
shall put you out of the Synagogues, yea, the time com-
eth, that whosoever killeth you, shall think that he doth
God service; and these things will they do unto you,*
because they have not known the father nor me. But
how well applyed let us see, not at all to his purpose;
for there the Lord Jesus foretold his Disciples, that
for his sake, and upon his account, Persecutions should

John 16
2, 3.

befall them; I ask whether in earnest he looks upon himself and other Socinians to be Disciples of Christ? May be such as Judas was, who betrayed his Person as they do his Truth; but true Disciples, that cannot be; for suppose that Sect were brought under the Rod, it would not be for his Cause: His Apostles, as we read in several places of the Book of the Acts, suffered Persecution for owning Christ to be the true Son of God, the holy one, the Prince of Life; and not for affirming him to be a meer Man, who had no Being before he was born of the Virgin Mary, and denying him to be true Eternal God of the same Nature with the Father; certainly if God should bring you to Punishment, ye could not have the face to say it is for the same Cause as his Disciples suffered, they suffered for giving him his due, and ye for robbing him of it.

Therefore to retort your own Argument upon you, I say, ye know neither the Father nor the Son; for, the Father ye cannot know but in and by the Son: The Son ye do not know, for ye will not own him to be what he is, namely, true eternal God, blessed for ever; thus out of our Saviour's own Words I conclude against you, as in this same Cause and upon the same account he did against the Jews, who looked on him as a meer Man, and would by no means own him truly to be God, Son of God, *Ye neither know me nor my Father, if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also*: Wherefore since ye know me not, ye know not my Father neither. This weight I farther lay upon you, how as ye know not, so ye have not the Father; for ye deny the Son to be what he is indeed, of the same Nature with the Father; and the Apostle saith, *Whoever denies the Son, the same hath not the Father*; to deny the Son is not only to deny him to be, but also to deny him to be what he is. And now, since I am upon this, your Words, *If we may believe our Saviour Christ*, are a Motive for me to go on, and to call things by their Name, to say, ye are a sort of Infidels; for ye will not believe God, tho' he speaks from Heaven, not only once but twice and thrice, in our Lord's Baptism, in his

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Matt. 3.

17. and

17. 5.

Joh. 12. 28

Transfiguration, and at another time, when the Voice came from Heaven, God the Father from Heaven proclaimed him to be his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased, with a Command to hear him, *Hear ye him;* yet ye will not believe the Father, nor hear the Son, who appeals to that Testimony of the Father, nor when he calls himself God's Son, onely begotten, who is One with the Father, in Power equal with him, *For what things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise;* that the Father sent him out of his Bosom, that he came down from Heaven, he proceeded and came down from God, and so many more things to that purpose: But now he speaks to you as once he did to the Jews, *Why do ye not understand my speech, even because ye cannot bear my word:* yet him ye will not hear; but mark what will become of it; *And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that Prophet in all things what-soever he shall say unto you, shall be destroyed among the People:* Ye would rob him of that Glory and Honour which he received from God the Father, which not only is recorded by the Evangelist, but confirmed by an Apostle with all the necessary Circumstances, what, where, and when; *We were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;* which he affirms not by hear-say, but as ear-witness; for he addeth, *And this voice which came from heaven, we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount:* But ye will hear neither Christ nor his Apostles, tho they speak loud and plainly enough; whence we may well conclude you to be none of his Sheep, whereof the great Shepherd himself gives this to be the proper Character, *that they hear and know his voice only, and not the voice of strangers,* and they follow him when he leads them out; but ye follow him not, only the Devices and Inventions of your own Heart.

Thus to return to you, who falsely would bring in your selves as Disciples of the Lord Jesus; we know, that as there is a Church of Christ, so there

Joh. 5.37.

Joh. 8.43.

Acts 3.22, 23.

2 Pet. 1. 16, 17, 18.

John 10. 3, 4, 5.

2 Cor. 11.
13, 14.

is a Synagogue of Satan, and that the Devil hath his Martyrs as well as the Lord Jesus; some have been so far hardened, as to dye for denying there is a God; therefore 'tis neither the Manner, nor the Place, but the Cause of Death which makes the Martyr; 'tis neither *Smithfield* in *London*; nor *Campo di Fiori* in *Rome*; for as the most honest Men, so the greatest Villains may happen to be executed in both; neither must we believe those who falsely would call themselves Disciples of Christ, and insinuate as if they suffer'd for his Cause, when 'tis for their Heresies and Blasphemies: I remember the Apostles words, how *false Apostles, deceitful Workers would transform themselves into the Apostles of Christ*: and no marvel, for *Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light*. Do not pretend to say, ye are for Christ, when ye are against him. As to your mis-applying of the Text to me, let me advise you to be more conversant with Scripture, and therein you may learn how, at another time, more fitly to adapt your Comparisons, and better to apply Texts, and not as you would so *ingeniously* screw out of that, how you think me an unfit Writer in behalf of the Trinity (which you believe not) and therefore did not so much as read over my Book; and I to answer *ad hominem* by a rational and natural Consequence, out of your own Words, that *you have not so much as read over my Book of the Trinity*, do conclude you to be a rash, giddy, and unfit Judge, whether or not I am an unfit Writer in behalf of the Trinity. Thus go you off the Stage like a Snuff. I answer you in your way, because you answer me not in mine.

A N
A N S W E R
TO THE
Second Letter.

HAVING done with one Antagonist, I must now turn to the other: Between them both they shar'd the Task, to try which of the two could most wrest and mis-represent things, and give a Man ill Language, wherein it must be own'd, this last yields it not to the first (for they writ after the same manner) and whose steps about my Epistle he follows in his first Page, and part of the next, wherein he would seem to soar high in his politick Enthusiasms, and then falls down right into a Nonsense, which he would father upon me; certainly a Man hath little to say or do, that stumbles at the Threshold, and falls a gathering Straws, when there are solid and good things to mind; and instead of examining high Matters of Divinity offer'd, he to put off the Blow, and for Diversion sake, turns to be a Grammarian, and piteously falls upon cavilling at Words: This, like the Dog in the Fable, is to snap at the Shadow and leave the Body: My words are these, *To time things well, is one of the best parts of Prudence*: To say it is the part of a prudent Man to act in due time and Season, is there any thing contrary to Sense and Reason? By the word Part is not meant any such thing as

page 17.

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we call *Essential* part, as the Soul is to Man, or what we call *Insegrant* part, such are an Arm or a Leg to the Body, but 'tis an usual way of speaking to say, 'Tis the part of a Wise Man not to be Hasty, 'tis the part of a Christian to Forgive, to signifie how 'tis proper for, and belongs to a Wise Man not to be Rash, and to a Christian to Forgive: I add, *and one of the most Essential Circumstances of our Actions*, the meaning is plain, how Timing things well, is one of the chief and most necessary Circumstances of our Actions. This is no just cause for any Man thereupon to entertain such idle and extravagant Fancies as we see him to do: Without being a great Philosopher, one may know there are several Circumstances belonging to every Action: An ordinary Rhetorician can tell the Rule --- *quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo, quando*. I take Agent, Time and Place, to be three Concomitants of any Action, and without the three no Action, so then the prudential part of an Agent in the Act, and to make it succeed, is to chuse a fit and proper Time; to apply a Remedy, take Physick or be let Blood; if done in due time, is to observe one of the chief and necessary Circumstances. If the word *Essential* joyned to *Circumstance* doth disquiet you, then by the word *most Essential* is improperly understood the Circumstance most necessary to be observed; we use to say a thing most *Essential*, or most *Necessary*, most to the purpose, most *Important* and most *Material*, to signifie the same thing or near upon't; I take the *Essence*, whether *Physically* or *Metaphysically*, to be the same with the *Nature* of the thing: And do you not think that *Circumstances* have their *Nature*, and that there is the *Nature* of an *Accident* as of a *Substance*? and that to the end one may Act well, there is that which is *Necessary* and most *Necessary*. God forbid, when we speak of Gods *Nature*, or even of matters of *Philosophy*, we should make no difference between *Essence* and *Circumstance*; but in *Discourse* 'tis usual, as you know too well, to make use of such improper and figurative Expressions. Doth not our *Grammar* tell us, that *Nouns* *Adjectives* are compared, and that there are three degrees of *Comparison*, have ye so far forgotten it? Thus
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the word Essential is an Adjective, whereof the Superlative we call most Essential, and we may say Essential, more and most Essential: Surely ye judicious and acute Sophisters, if ever you learned Logick, were taught, that there is a Predicament called *Proprium*, and that there is a *Proprium* not only *primò*, but also *quartò modo*; *Quod convenit soli, semper, & omni*, which in Grammar words we may call most proper in the Superlative degree: And ye Gentlemen, for so I must call you, (tho' I would have call'd you by your Names if ye had subscrib'd your Letters) ye Gentlemen *Socinians*, who are so much for Tropes and Figures, might know how 'tis usual by an *Hyperbole* to represent things with exaggeration as whiter than Snow, blacker than Pitch; and if such manners of speaking with exaggeration be admitted in a common Discourse, much more may this improper one now in question: So sometimes a thing which we like well, we call best of all; thus if instead of saying Essential I said most Essential, I did use the Superlative degree instead of the Positive: But these are but Quibbles of your own, which argues, that seeing you stick at such things, you have little else to say for your selves; ye leave things for Words, and like drowning Men, lay hold upon any thing that lieth in your way to save a sinking Cause, when no serious Man but would think it below himself to stay upon such things; all your Observations and Inferences are an effect of a distemper'd Imagination, and not of a sound Reason, whereby you deserve the name of the *Ridiculer ridiculed*: As well as you, we know Essence to be one thing and Circumstance another; but that were tolerable, if ye did not as ye do, jest with Holy things. But I think to know where the Sore lieth; ye do not like the words Essential nor Essence, derivative nor primitive; and tho' in the Schools of Divinity and Philosophy they be used, yet ye dislike them, because in so many Letters not to be found in Scripture; but here you might see I use it not in a Religious but Civil account. I own I am at a loss to find a way how to please such nice Spirits as ye are; for of one side ye would not have us to use the words Essence, Trinity, Person, because you say they are not in the word of

God, yet ye both find fault with me for making use of Scripture so much as I do against you in my Book: So ye Gentlemen, prodigies of Learning, may now see, (which if you do not others do) how ye sin against very common Rules; what then will become of *the four things you learned*, after you put your Wits to the rack to make others pass for Nonsensical Scriblers, who hardly can write three words of good Sense? Thus if your witty Premises do fall, how can your learned Inferences stand? These miserable Shifts, which every solid Man would scorn to trouble his head with, do tend only to shew how in you is an earnest desire, but want of power to make others who differ from you, to pass for Silly and Ridiculous: so take to your selves what you had prepared for others: But what's all this to the Cause, but a putting it off and running away from it?

pag. 19.

pag. 18.

Having shewed how, when I penned my Epistle, I thank God, I was in my right Senses, the next thing I must do, is to prove my Charge against *Socinianism*, which he calls *false and disagreeing*, yet I make no doubt but it will stick. First, I call it *Blasphemous*, and I shall prove it out of better Authority than that of the *Polonian Knight* or *Bidle's*, or what the Reasons to the contrary of the Authors of both Letters, can come to. In order to't, I say, there is a twofold Blasphemy, one *Positive*, when Men call or otherwise make God a Liar, and to deny himself, or the like; and the other *Negative*, when Men deny him to be Infinite, Almighty, or Eternal; the first when God is made to be what he is not, the second when he is deny'd to be what he is: That Blasphemy is an abominable Injury, directly against God's Nature, Attributes or Works, is so plainly and frequently set down in Scripture, that I think unnecessary for me to prove it; and if the same offence committed against God's Nature, Attributes and Works, be called Blasphemy, and that committed against the Lord *Jesus's* Person be called Blasphemy; it follows first, that Jesus Christ is true God; then secondly, that whosoever denies Christ to be God in his Nature, Attributes and Works, he is a Blasphemer: Now *Socinianism* denieth
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our Saviour, Divine Nature, and Essential Attributes of that Nature; therefore *Socinianism* is a Blasphemous Opinion and Doctrine, as much for denying Christ to be true God by Nature, as by denying Divine Nature, Almightyness and Eternity. Now that the Sin called *Blasphemy* is sometimes committed against the Lord Jesus, we learn it out of his own mouth upon the occasion of the *Pharisees* saying he did cast out Devils by *Beelzebub* the Prince of Devils, this he called *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*, the chiefest of all: And when he was in the hands of the *Jews*, the things by them done and spoken against him, were by the Evangelist called *Blasphemy*, and many other things spake they blasphemously against him. Thus when the *Jews* spake against the things that were spoken by Paul, and what were those things? That Christ was the Son of God; which to prove, he made use of the words of *Psalm 2. Thou art my Son*, &c. in the proper Sense; their speaking against this is call'd *Contradicting and Blaspheming*; upon the same account in another place 'tis said, *they opposed and blasphemed*. Thus Paul saith of himself, *he was before* his Conversion a *Blasphemer*, and compelled others to blaspheme, that is to deny and speak ill of Christ; so to say that Christ is not God of the same Nature and Power equal with the Father, is as great a Blasphemy, as to say he was or is a Sinner, which any one that hath a religious Honour and Love for him, and hopeth for Mercy at his hands when at the last day he shall appear in his Glory, cannot, and as much as in him lieth, must not endure.

The next Charge against *Socinianism* is *Atheism* and *Deism*; he doth couple them thinking to shew a Contradiction, but there is none: I say to worship the true God not in a true manner is *Idolatry*, as well as to worship a false God: *Jeroboam* for worshipping the true God in an undue manner, is branded with *Idolatry*, and provoked God as much as *Abab* for worshipping *Baal*, or a false God, or else with *Papists* we must take away the Second Commandment: In like manner, I say, not to know the true God in a true manner is *Atheism*, as well as not to know

Matt. 12.
31.

Luke 22.
65.

Acts 13.
33, 45.

1 Tim. 1.
13.

Acts 26.
11.

Ephes. 2.
12.

Coloss. 2.
9.

pag. 19.

him at all; and the true way to know God, is to know him in Christ, without whom no true knowledge of God; to that purpose the Apostle saith unto the *Ephesians*, *that at that time when they were without Christ, they also were without God in the world*: That is, they were *Atheists*; and is it truly to know God in Christ, only to know him there in a Creature? (seeing the very Heathens can tell us, *Præsentemque refert quæ libet verba Deum*) and not rather as in him in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. These fragments of Scripture please not *Socinians*, for they not knowing God in Christ, as his Eternal and Natural Father, are thereby branded with *Atheism*. As for *Deism*, I take it in the Sense wherein it is taken now adays, for a *Deist* is he who prefers Humane Reason before Faith and Revelation; so you own my Charge is not a perfect Nonsense, tho' in some degree you would have it still to be a Nonsense; for you are pleased thus magisterially to decide, *Now I confess this sort of Charge is not so perfect a Nonsense as the other*; however I still lay under the Lash, for it is a silly Calumny, as you say, yet 'tis no Calumny but a Truth, and that no silly one: (I shall anon take notice of your Style.) *Deism* is not only an absolute denial of all Revelation, but also 'tis a giving the preference to Humane Reason before Revelation; which is done when you set up your own Reason to be a Judge of Revelation; and here I hold you fast, for else you would give the Slip. Tho' you have not the face to deny Christian Religion to be of Divine Institution, yet your own Reason, which your Brother calls the only Guide which God hath given us to Judge and Interpret that Revelation, you exalt above it; Is not this to set up a Tribunal over and above the Word of an Infallible God, and to make your poor silly Humane Reason the Oracle or Revealer of the true Sense of that Revelation? So I leave you to refute this Charge of *Deism* as well as you can, the *Racovian* Catechism shall afford you no help, except you mince it as you use to do other things, which by and by I shall, by the Grace of God, take notice of. A *Deist* we call him who makes a God of his own reason, as you do, that

is, sets up a false God; now between such a one and an *Atheist* there is not the direct opposition which you imagine, for in these Times *Deist* is taken in an ill Sense, and in a way of Reproach; but to believe a God is no Reproach, and ought to be taken in a favourable Sense; so 'tis the use of the words that shews their signification: Besides, as there are two sorts of *Atheists*, the one in Theory the other in Practice; for as there is a *Fool*, whom *David* speaks of, who saith in his heart there is no God, so there is a *Fool* that saith so in his Actions, and lives as if there was no God: The like we say of *Deists*, some are Speculative, such as believe as you do, their own Reason to be the only guide in Matters of Religion; others are Practical *Deists*, who accordingly own no other Sense of Scripture, but what is their own Interpretation. And others through-paced, I may add, who are both Practical and Theoretical *Deists*, and I make no doubt but that ye know well where they live, tho' you question much whether we have any of these Socinians in England. Plat. 53. 1.

Profaneness and *Immorality* follow next: *Profaneness* I call a handling of Holy things without a due Respect, which in a high degree is the guilt of *Socinians*, as in several places of my Book I made it plainly appear; how bold and sawcy are they with God's Word? How contrary to the analogy of Faith, the design of the Spirit of God, and the natural, usual and proper signification of the Words, do they wrest Scripture to make it serve their own turn? They irreverently use it as a Stalking-Horse to answer their ends, and by forcing unusual and far-off-fetch'd Interpretations, as much as in them lieth, would make it contradict it self: This, and preferring Humane before Spiritual and Heavenly things, like *Esau*, whom Scripture calleth a profane person, for selling his birth-right for a morsel of meat, I brand with the name of *Profaneness*; and shall not I call so the Preference which you give your Humane Reason above Divine Revelation, when you make it to be the Judge of it? In some places of your Letters, your own Example is a proof of *Profaneness* attending on *Socinianism*, let the particular of your Jestings at the Name of *Christ's mystical Body* Heb. 12. 16.

- to signifie the Church, serve for all; you cannot be, but wilfully ignorant, how in several places of Scripture an exprels mention is made of the Body of Christ, whereof we are said to be the Members, and Christ is called *the Head of the Church, and the Saviour of the Body*. This cannot be spoken of his Natural Body which now is in Heaven, so it must be of another Body of his, and that's our being in him by Faith, and he in us by his Spirit, which Scripture calls a *Mystery*, so in Scripture Phrase we may call that a *Mystical Body* without giving profane Men cause to Jest at it as you do. *God's Name*, saith David, is *Holy and Reverend*, but ye make bold to profane it. As for *Immorality* it consists both in Words and Actions, Carriage and Conversation; so that tho' one was not an Immoralist either in every Kind or in every Degree, if it be but in one, 'tis enough to denounce him an Immoralist: As for Me, who neither have nor desire to have any Society with the professed Enemies or false Friends of Christ, I do not meddle with their Actions, for 'tis not my business, but leave every one to God; besides that, I ever avoid, as much as I can making or meddling with Persons, only with Things: But, I say, that Profaneness is usually attended with Immorality, for commonly Sins go by couples, and he who is so profane as to Jest with God and his Word, is soon drawn to that *jesting, foolish talking and filthiness*, which the Apostle joineth together: And you may know how *Paulus Samosatenus* Bishop of *Antioch*, one of your first and great Ringleaders, kept young Wenches, and allowed his Clergy to do the like.
- Tho' *the Persecuting Accuser*, as I am call'd, *have not the Wit of Machiavel nor of his Villains*, yet he hath Truth on his side, which is better: And the Negative Argument, how neither the *Racovian* *Catechism* nor *Socinian* Author hath written so, cannot put off the Blow; indeed Men must wholly have forfeited common Sense and Reason, who in their Writings and in the face of the Sun, will set up for Champions of Profaneness, Immorality, Atheism, Impiety, Blasphemy, or Idolatry. But what they do not plainly express, is often drawn by good and lawful Consequence;

quence; in any of your Books you do not say ye are Profane, but out of what you say in your Two Letters, how that, as to your selves, you are the Judges of Scripture, and that your Reason is your only Guide in giving such Interpretation as ye think fit, is not this to make bold with Holy things? Tho' I had no other Evidence (which yet I am full of) I say, that only is a sufficient ground for me to conclude your Principles to be Profane, which make you prefer your own Reason before the Teaching of the Holy Ghost out of that same Scripture, and those who embraced your Principles, are thereby led into Profaneness.

What you say about the Means used by some Men to promote Heresies by high pretences to Piety and Vertue, may be true, and what I say too, every Bait is not proper for every sort of Fish, so Men have several ways to get Proselytes, according to the several Tempers of those whom they would draw to themselves; do but find the predominant Passion of a Man, and, except God be pleased to strengthen him, ye are like soon to draw him into your Snare, according as they are acted by Worldly Considerations. There is but one true God, and one true Principle of Religion and Piety, but there are many Gods of this World; give but Riches to the Covetous, Honours to the Ambitious, and Pleasures to the Voluptuous, without God's restraining Grace they will soon be for you; but you will say, what's this to us? we know all that: Then I come to you, and say, how I take you to be zealous for *Socinianism* as you take me to be against it, and by your carriage we find to be in you a great desire to propagate it: To increase the number of Proselytes, you must draw them out of several Parts, and ye know how in this Corrupt Age, there is abroad a Spirit of Profaneness, Immorality, and of Sin in all kinds; now for you to make Converts out of all these kinds, ye would think it would tend much to the Honour of your Cause; and as in the Nation there is also a sort of Witty People, tho' sometimes Profane, to please those too, you study with fine Words, smooth Language, and with such plausible Reasons as you are Masters of, to support it, and 'tis known ye are unwearied

in your endeavours to promote the Interest of the Cause: I see no reason to hinder me from believing, but that any who will join with you in the main, shall be welcome among you, and this Intriguing Spirit in you, makes you the more dangerous to our Religion, and shews the necessity of a great care required to prevent the ill Effects of it; thus ye follow the Maxims of *Papists*, tho' in some things you would seem to be much against them; for among them do but come to Mals and own the Church, then do what you will, and believe what you please as to your self, you are a good Catholick still; and the *Jesuits*, who among them are reckoned to screw up things to the highest, do say, Commit what Sin ye will, and under an easie Penance ye shall from us have a full Absolution; all this to draw a Throng and get their Churches to be crouded; so ye will do or say, be but *Unisarian*, as to the rest give Scripture what Sense and Interpretation your Reason suggests unto you, and all shall be well; as to Life and Manners, we shall leave you to that same only guide your own Reason: They which are unfound in the true Faith, without which 'tis impossible to please God, 'tis very possible for them to be so in their Practise; tho' Men teach not Atheism, Profaneness and Immorality, yet it being too much the Religion of the Times, some may happen to practise it, and to strengthen themselves, will indifferently receive among them those who do: So this is no new way to promote Heresie, I wish it be not successful, tho' you say 'tis not like to be so.

Ye may know the true God, yet not as he ought to be known; in and through Christ; ye know not Christ, and will not own him to be such as he is, true God, Son of God by eternal Generation, and as the Father is glorified in the Son, if ye glorifie not the Son as he ought to be, ye glorifie not the Father? but what followeth for not glorifying God as he should be? St. Paul can tell you, how *because men when they knew God, glorified him not as God, or as he ought to have been, therefore he gave them over to those dreadful Judgments and abominable Courses, which may be read in the place quoted in the Margin, whereby ye*

Matt. 11.
27.

Rom. 1.
21, &c.

may

may see Errors in Judgment followed with those in Practile: Hereunto I shall add that which can serve to strengthen what I said about Atheism, and 'tis this; Our Saviour told the Jews, *Ye have not known God*, John 8. the reason is, because they had not known him: To 55. know one is to know him for what he is; this Reason the Lord Jesus gave his Disciples, *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and hence- Chap. 14. forth ye know him and have seen him*; the reason must be this, because ye have known and seen me. For the 2 Cor. 4. knowledge of the glory of God is only in the face of 6. Jesus Christ.

As to the Charge of Idolatry, he seems willing to save me the trouble to make it good, for he saith, *As to what concerns Idolatry, it must be confessed, that Socinus's System of Divinity is not absolutely free from it*; and he gives his reason thus, *for he maintaineth that Divine Worship is to be given to Jesus Christ, tho' he be not the true Almighty, and the eternal God, but only something I know not what, more than a meer Man*; which is but what themselves make of him and no more. To render the Creature a Religious Worship only due to the Creator, is certainly Idolatry; But, saith he, *I question much whether we have any of these Socinians in England*; he is best able to tell, being no doubt, well acquainted with most Socinians in England: He thereby declares that there is more than one kind of Socinians, and what a kind of them he himself is of, namely a *Davidian*: Among the promoters of this Heresie, I in my Book took notice of one *Francis David*, who tho' in every thing else he agreed with *Socinus*, yet herein he differed from him, that he denyed any Religious Worship should be rendered unto *Christ*; and that the Author of the Letter is of that Sect of *Socinians*, I am confirmed in my opinion by what he said before, how *Socinus* lies under the suspicion of having 7. pag. 21. contributed to the Persecution of *Francis David*: Here appears his Partiality for this last against the first; so *Socinus* was a Persecutor, so may *Socinians* be upon occasion: His System was not absolutely free from Idolatry, but *David's* was; however that distinction cannot clear him, for tho' according to the *Socinian* I Hypothesis,

Hypothesis the *Davidian* Opinion be free from Idolatry, yet according to ours, 'tis the worst of the two; for they altogether deprive our Saviour of the Worship which the others yield him in some way: in the mean time he would give us the slip thus, *It is not unlikely but that Socinianism may get clear of the Charge of Idolatry, either by the help of her own Logick, or by virtue of the Authority of the Church:* as if the Church was bound to defend their Errors. But anon I, by the Grace of God, shall examine it, but before, we must make an end of the Charge.

After the Word Idolatry, is in abbreviation an *Ec.* which at large he writes *Es cetera*: upon such enumerations it is usual for brevity's sake to conclude with that Letter, thereby including other things of the same or like Nature, but he like a weak silly Gnat (no more than I a Conjuror, as in the place he saith I am not) sticks at the Cobweb and would make an insipid Jest of it, tho the foregoing things are serious and of moment, and the better to set out that Buffoon's Trick of his, he goes backward to the *Dissenters of the last Age*, who, saith he, *baised the Word unmercifully.* I see, as to Time, we must help his Memory, for that which was about between 40 and 50 years ago, within this same Century, he calls the last age; then he omits the chief ground of Exception against it which was an Oath in the case, Men were made to swear to an *Ec.*: but here his *righteous* Conscience, as he calls my Soul, is not put to the Rack; but seeing he presses me to declare what I meant by *Ec.* after Atheism, Deism, Profaneness, Immorality, Idolatry, whereby I also pointed at Popery, I now fill it up with *Davidism*, whereunto I might add *Ebionism, Cerinthism, Arianism, Photinianism, Sabellianism, Samosatranism, Macedonianism, Pelagianism, Donatism*: ye see how big-bellied was my *Ec.* to contain so many things, and more too; for *Socinianism* I look upon as a Sink into which fall all virulent Humours against the Person and Grace of our blessed Lord and Saviour; as in the Body a diseased and infected Place draws most if not all corrupted Humours to it self: and as your Religion is a kind of Confusion, and ye are great *Lazendinarsians*, so to strengthen your selves you reject none but receive all Comers into your Communion, which you would set up for the only School of Wit, Parts, and Learning, and this in part was my Meaning when I said how to promote your Cause you would be ready to admit among

among you not only all Excrements of Christian Religion, but even *Jews* and *Mahometans*, for you think the way to Heaven broad and easie, there being, as ye say, but very few things necessary to Salvation to be done and believed, contrary to what our Saviour said, *Straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leads unto Life*, and his Apostle saith *the Righteous is scarcely saved*. By what I said it may appear whether my Charge was disagreeing, false and incredible, or whether the Attendance I gave *Socinianism* doth not belong to it. 1 Pet. 4.
18.

Now I come to the two ways whereby you think *Socinianism* may get clear of the Charge of *Idolatry*, the first you say is *by the help of her own Logick*, the second *by virtue of the Authority of the Church*; its Logick is refined enough according to this World, as far as *Mode* and *Figure* can stretch, you will; if *Barbara* cannot do, may be *Celarent*, *Cesare*, *Festini*, or some *Bocardo* will, all these are at the command of your *Logicians*, then *Sophism*, as *Sorites* or the like, will come in space and in course, and when an Argument in its own *Mode* and *Figure* cannot do, then you will be mincing, for out of your own Letters I find ye are excellent in that Art; now your Logick is this, if nothing else can serve, you will say ye are no *Socinians*, ye take it an Injury to be so called, for ye say ye are *very injuriously termed Socinians*, yea twice in the same Page; so ye positively deny your selves to be *Socinians*, do ye say so out of shame or out of fear? one would think there is cause for both: Men who call themselves and pretend to be Christians should indeed be ashamed to go about robbing Christ of his due, and afraid of Punishment, if not from Men, yet at last from God, the Avenger of his Honour: not only (if we may believe him) he is no *Socinian*, but saith he, *if there be any in England in more than I know*; sometimes some Men in the World know not themselves, however they will not confirm their Denial with an Oath. They will not be *Socinians*, yet when they are charged with a Denial of Revealed Religion, they appeal to the *Racovian Catechism*, which is the Summary of *Socinianism*: this playing fast and loose in matters of Religion is not to be endured; however they are brought to deny themselves and so they may be allowed to deny their Master *Socinus*: but why do ye engage in a Cause, if you are ashamed to own it? hereupon to them we may put the Question, which upon

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the account of the most holy Trinity they put to us; a thing is or is not? ye are Socinians or ye are not? if ye be, why are ye such Hypocrites as to deny it? if not, why do you concern your selves for them? let them maintain their own Quarrel and defend their own Cause, and why do ye take up the Cudgels for them? why in their Defence, contrary to good Nature, Breeding and Moderation, do ye write so passionately and angrily, that one would think your Letters to be dated from *Billinggate*? if ye be *Davidians* ye are *Socinians* still, and the worst of them too: Sir, 'tis not the Change of Name that can alter the thing, if ye hold *Socinus* his damnable Opinions, ye are *Socinians*, call your selves never so much by the Name of *Unitarians*, or what other ye please; so this Sophistical Logick of denying your selves to be *Socinians*, cannot do the Work.

Let us see whether the other which you brag of, *the Authority of the Church*, will do't: these Men make use of a great Name with a Design to shelter themselves under it: one of them falsely chargeth me with making, as he calls it, *an impudent Reflection*; but here upon good grounds, in his own coin, I might turn it upon him and say, 'tis a piece of transcendent Impudence for such Cattel to call themselves Members of the Church, which this doth in as plain Words as can be, *For I am no Socinian, but a Member of the Church of England by Law established*. So formerly some called themselves the Church which were the Synagogue of *Satan*, and as our glorified Saviour knew them, so he knows these, *I know*, saith he, *the blasphemy of them, which say they are Jews and are not, but do lye, and are the Synagogue of Satan*, he knows them to be Bl.sphemers: *Socinians* Members of the Church of England! then *Satan* is an Angel of Light, for sometimes transforming himself into one: those who are a scandal to the Christian Name, and would prove a shame to any Church but their own, to be Members of our Church! then such Members as are rotten and gangreened, ought to be cut off and spued out of the Church, in case they be in, as they pretend they are: Members of the Church are her Sons, but these can be no natural lawfully begotten, but Bastards, who are in only to watch an opportunity and time to bring in Thieves and Enemies; unnatural Sons who rend their Mother, and care not if she were torn in pieces, such Sons to the Mother as
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p. 33.

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Rev. 2. 9.

& 3. 9.

the Harlot was Mother to the Child, whom she pretended to be Mother to, tho she was not, content she was that the Child should be divided and cut to pieces. I hear indeed how some of them are in Orders, and actually in the Service of the Church; and this I meant when I said the Enemy and Plague of *Socinianism* was gotten into the Bowels of the Church, the more the Pity; and therefore seeing they will not hide themselves for shame, here I do humbly desire the Heads and Governours of it, to take notice of *Socinians* boasting to be Members of the Church, and care to weed them out. Good Lord! Men who overthrow the first Article of our Religion of one God in three Persons; and the second of two Natures in one Person, besides others, the *Athanasian* Creed, the first part of the Litany, with several others of the Service Book, yet they have the face to call themselves Members of the Church.

However 'tis worth the inquiring into, what they ground upon their calling themselves Members of the Church? we already have taken notice of one place, wherein, speaking of themselves in the third Person, they say, *For Peace sake they submit to the Phrase of the Church, and own three Persons*: so they seem not to be much concerned for the Truth, to know whether what they or we say be true, but they take care of their Safety, being, as they pretend, alarm'd with fear of Fire and Faggot, and to save their Bacon; therefore I am apt to believe that what they say, in relation to this, is more out of fear of Punishment than of love for Truth: however for Peace sake they are Members of the Church: but to dive into the bottom of this Title of theirs of being Members of the Church, two Places I am to look into, the first is this, *As for those late English Writers sometimes called Unitarians, and very injuriously termed Socinians, they seem desirous to wash their hand of it: and their disputing some of the Articles of our Church, hath proceeded chiefly from their Apprehension that it would be Idolatry to admit them.* Thus still under disguise, and of a third Person, they are those late English Writers who call themselves *Unitarians*, who seem desirous to wash their hand of *Socinianism*, so 'tis only seemingly and in appearance, for else what could make them tooth and nail concern themselves so much for *Socinians*; let it be taken notice of how these pretended Members of the Church confess that they disputed some of the Articles of it, and these

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are none of the less fundamental, which they suspected as leading into Idolatry, and therefore they would not admit them: See what Members of the Church these are, who publickly and in Print own that some of the Articles of the Church do tend to Idolatry; doth not this very thing deserve Punishment according to Law? and to justify their disputing of some of the Articles, they would insinuate as if the Church, or some part of it, had owned they were in the right. *Therefore upon the prudent Explanation which hath been given* (he doth not name by whom) *of some obnoxious Terms, they wave the Disputes and come in as Brethren:* This is as good as to say, that in our Articles those that are the most Fundamental, are in terms justly obnoxious, that is to their Cavils: And to shew they had cause to take Exceptions, an Interpretation hath, according to their Sense, been given those Articles, and so, upon their own Terms, they are come in as Brethren; if they are come in, then they were out before, and so no Members: Thus it seems they had Correspondency in the Church with some who, as they term it, *prudently* made way for them to come in: Now doth not this Confession justify what in my Epistle I said, *Socinianism* is gotten into the Church; and consequently shew a necessity to turn it out: Thus having, as he thinks, twisted *Socinians* with the Church, he most judiciously draws this Inference, and Ironically bids me defiance; *I hope Mr. Gailhard, will not in anger against them, impute Idolatry to our Church, as by Law established.* Can any thing in relation to the Church, be spoken more insolently in the face of the whole Nation? A strange thing, indeed, tho' nothing may seem strange from Men whose Principles allow them to say and make themselves any thing: Like the grievous Wolves, which in Sheeps Clothing enter in among the Flock, not to feed but to tare it; to deceive the blind, they come in with *Esau's* Hands, but the Voice is *Jacob's*, yet being known should bring a Curse upon themselves: But 'twill be strange indeed, if such ones be once found out, having under the cloak of taking Care of Souls Poisoned them, be not cast out by Suspension or Deprivation, according to the severity of the Penal or at least of the Ecclesiastical Laws. Upon this occasion, the Eyes of the whole Nation are fixed upon my Lords the Bishops.

The other Place which I must take into consideration is this; *He tells us, speaking of me, that to deny the Trinity and our Saviours Divinity, is as much as in a Man lieth, to pull our Religion up by the very roots, and quite to overthrow it; which, saith he, that the Socinians do, he takes it for granted: That they deny the Trinity and Christ's Deity, 'tis done in the face of the Sun, and that these Points are the Foundation of Christian Religion, no true Christian will deny; and my Inference is good, that pulling down the Foundation, the Building doth necessarily fall: Yet, according to the usual way, he would mince the matter thus; Yes those who are injuriously called Socinians declare, that they only dispute some unscriptural Terms with us, but are well satisfied with the Sense put upon those Terms and Explications, which a considerable majority seem to be agreed in. They cannot leave off the ridiculous juggling in their change of Persons; for they are those called Socinians, who dispute with us, that is with themselves; so they act both parts, put the Question and answer it, be the Socinian and Church-men too; but the worst is, they want Sincerity, that whilst they indeed are the Socinian, yet would pass for the Church-men. Besides, they would have the Dispute to be only about Words, and so of no Importance; thus whether there be Three Persons in the most adorable Trinity, and whether the Lord Jesus and the Holy Ghost be truly God, they make it to be a Dispute only about a Word and a Trifle: What a Confidence is it for such Men so publicly to vent their Impieties? Thereupon they declare to be satisfied upon this ground, that a considerable Majority of the Church seem to be agreed with them in their Sense; so according to this, a considerable Majority of the Church is become Socinian: Let him that can, believe this, for my own part I am not so Credulous; however, I humbly desire of the Church, especially of that lesser part which this Man owneth not to be Socinian, to mind what he saith so openly, and to take it into their serious Consideration, I bring it to their Door and there leave it: They are highly concerned to take in hand their own Cause*

pag. 33.

Cause as 'tis now become; I have done and said what might be expected from a Member, my work being to Vindicate the Honour and Right of my most blessed Lord and Saviour, as far as he will be pleased to enable me, and to pull off the Vizard from these falsely pretended Members of the Church.

In the Pamphlet are several Trifles under the Head, how wide Socinianism is spread, which yet in my way I shall take a short notice of, not minding what he saith of my *ill-natur'd and malicious Paper*, for by this time he hath pretty well used me to ill Language as to an idle foolish talking, and (which is the worst) ridiculing and profaning Holy things. In several Parts of *Europe* where I happened to meet with the dispersed *Jews*, I sometimes took an occasion to discourse with some of them about our blessed Saviour, but in them all from the highest to the lowest, I found a gall and prejudice against him, and have cause to think those whom we have here in *England* to be acted by the same Spirit: and by some words heard to drop out of *Mahasseh Ben Israel's* Mouth, when in *Cromwell's* time he came over, I perceived that if ever they were suffered to stay here, they in Matters of Religion would be as ready to do us harm as themselves good in another way; and I thought that I being about naming the Enemies of Christ, the *Jews* we have here might not be omitted: and I am of opinion, that in case among them there be any Man of Parts, Socinians would not be backward to gather out of them what Arguments they could against the Person of our blessed Lord, so not from *Mahometans*, if any were near and able to afford them: and this I said in relation to *Servetus*, one of their Ringleaders, who in his Youth being in *Africa* among *Jews* and *Mahometans*, suck'd their Blasphemies and brought them into *Europe*; and to shew how, in relation to the Principles of Religion about our Saviour's Person, 'tis possible for a *Socinian* to become a *Turk*, I prove it by the Example of *Alciati*, one of their Gang, and *Socinus's* Companion, who out of *Poland* fled into *Turkey* and became *Mahometan*. Do not think I do you any wrong, when speaking of *Socinianism* I mention *Mahometanism*; for tho' as well as you they deny
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our blessed Saviour to be God, yet they own him to be a great Prophet sent by God: 'Tis observable how *Mahomet* himself in that part of his *Alcoran* where in he relates that notorious Imposture of his having been carry'd up into the highest Heaven, there to see great and strange Mysteries, (whence may be you borrowed your Dream of an imaginary Ascension of our Lord and Saviour after his Baptism before he began to Teach) when at his coming to the first Heaven he met with *Adam*, in the second *Noah*, *Abraham* in the third, &c. he saith, they all one after another, commended themselves to his Prayers; but when he came into the seventh, where he met *Jesus*, himself he commended to *Jesus's* Prayers. And if ye will know how in many things about the Trinity and Christ's Divinity *Socinians* agree with *Mahometans*, I refer you to *Hottingerus* in his *Histor. Orient.* l. 2. c. 3. Yet tho' what I speak upon the Matter be words of Truth and Soberness, he has as good as call'd me Mad, and fell into such a long raving Fit, as I think it would require a strong dose of Hellebore to purge away the Matter which caused it; and that makes him so often talk of Fire and Faggot, and such other things as he brings in over head and shoulders, and so looks upon me as one who would see all *Socinians* put to death: *Socinianism* indeed I would gladly see rooted out, but to have Men put to death, is neither my inclination nor my work; yet as there is a Sin of concealing what one hath seen or known, so I cannot but take notice of, that, as in the case of a false Swearer, God said *thine Eye shall not pity*, so the Blasphemer was by his immediate command put to death.

Lev. 5. 11

Deut. 19.

21.

Lev. 24.

16, 23.

He would take advantage of something I said about *Arminians*, and upon that occasion would act the Statesman's part, and shew I have taken wrong measures to gain my Point, and so would ironically give Counsel: By what they say in several places, I see they are free enough to Advise, tho' undesired and unfit; but they should know we are not used to take the Counsel of our Enemies: Men who stand for the Truth are not byass'd by Worldly Considerations and Designs, tho' never so plausible and specious: I thank God, in Mat-

ters of Religion I have no Squint Eye, I am neither ashamed nor afraid openly to own a Truth, if I was not satisfied it is so, I would not own it, but it being, I will do't, by the grace of God, as long as I live, till I see cause to the contrary: Therefore 'tis but time and labour lost for such Advisers; their wise Counsels let them keep for themselves, for some things which they call Sense and Reason, others upon better grounds call Sensual Reason. And here, Sirs, I must tell you, how you talk so much of want of Learning in others, as if ye were the only great Doctors of the World; if, as ye say, I am a Mystery to you, so is your Learning a Mystery to me; by your Letters I cannot find where it lies, nor no Man else I think: But to speak confidently, to lodge all Brains in the World within your own Skull, to outface Men, to wrest and misrepresent what others say, and to set up for Judges of all good Sense, Wit and Learning, that indeed ye sufficiently learned, and every one may well be satisfied how great proficients ye are in that kind of Learning: But to take my turn to Advise you, do not always trust your own Looking-glass, for it doth but flatter you, and represents not after Nature; ye would appear unto the World as if all Wit, Parts and Learning were monopolised to your selves, and all besides you lying in Blindness and Ignorance: That Original Sin derived from, and inherent in Socinus's Family, that old Leaven in you ought to be purg'd, but God knows when it will be, if at all, for ye look very big upon all others, like the proud Pharisees, *This people who not knoweth the Law are Cursed*, but we sit in Moses his Seat.

Matters of Grace and Providence I believe to be of the highest Importance, and such as our Salvation depends upon, and in my judgment I am fully satisfied *Arminians* to be much in the wrong; but however if a Comparison be made between the *Socinian* and *Arminian* Principles, no Man that is acquainted with both can but make a difference; for tho' in many things they agree, yet in others of the most Essential, as about the Trinity and the Person of our blessed Saviour they differ from them, and therein join with us against that common Enemy, *Socinians* lay under open

open Blaphemy and condemned Heresie by the first *Oecumenick* Council and others following; the *Arminians* not so, I mean not *Worstius* and the like, but such as in comparison of others are Moderate: But still I say, that the Cause against *Socinians* cannot so effectually be handled upon *Arminian* Principles, for in some things their Bounds are so near and undiscernable, that sometimes a Man cannot fall upon one but he must tread upon the other, and one blow sometimes hits them both; so sometimes the *Arminian* doth not strike home upon the *Socinian*, for fear of hurting himself.

However, to shew you what a difference we ought to make between Adversaries and Adversaries; we have some Disputes both against *Lutherans* and *Papists*, yet much more and greater against the last than against the first; certainly we will not carry our selves equally towards both, for there is cause to make a great distinction between them, which to shew, upon occasion we keep Communion with *Lutherans* when we may not with *Papists*; yet the former are in a gross error to think the Substance of the glorified Body of Christ which is now in Heaven, and shall be until he comes to Judge the Quick and the Dead, to be included in, with, and under the Bread and Wine; yet because they declare they adore not the Bread nor the Wine, we do not look upon them as Idolaters, as we take *Papists* to be, for they adore a Wafer under the notion that it is turned into the Substance of the Body of Christ, and we are forbidden to have Communion with Idolaters: Thus we ought to make a difference between *Lutherans* and *Papists*; so we must between those who would destroy the Grace of God in Christ (which is very ill) and those who impiously fly against his Person, as ye do; nay I say *Socinians* in some things are worse than *Papists*, who own the Article of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of Divine Nature, and the Divinity of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, which ye deny: Ye are the worst of all Christian Societies, which Name ye are unworthy of, because ye reject, despise and undervalue the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, from whom we are called Christians, and will not take his Word nor

p. 25.

God the Father's when he is by him and by himself called *Son of God*.

This Man, as well as his Partner, will make use of his Arithmetick; and because I complain'd of the increase and number of *Socinians*, he makes a potter about almost all the Church, a moiety of the *Presbyterians*; Nine parts in Ten of the *Quakers*; like a Squirrel in a Cage, which turns again and again, but never the farther on in his way, always within the Circle; so he, which way soever he turns himself, is ever upon his Dunghill. As to the Number of *Socinians*; tho' it was never so inconsiderable comparatively, yet 'tis ever too great, tho' never so few yet still too many; One Wolf in a Sheepfold can do Havock enough; only one that hath the Plague can infect a whole Town; always Vermint multiplieth too fast; wherefore to prevent the Growth and Increase of it, 'tis necessary a sufficient care be taken by those who are concern'd, (especially those whose Diocess is much infected with, and made the center of that Vermine) whom *David*, a great King and Judge of *Israel*, and a Prophet too, gives this Charge unto, *Be Wise now therefore. O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the Earth*, Psal. 2. Dignity calls for and commands Duty, and to whom much is given, of them much shall be required. Not only a Disposition but also a Resolution in Magistrates, is necessary, for 'tis that which helps to put Life into those Laws, which otherwise languish for want of due and discreet Execution, wherein one is to go to the root of the Evil, if he will extirpate it: In some Distempers the Dose must not be weak, else it will but stir the Humours, and not remove them. But what is it that *David* would have Kings and Judges of the Earth to learn and be instructed in? in the next Verse he saith it, to *serve the Lord with fear*; in their station to defend his Cause and maintain his Concerns, is part of the Service required here: But whom is this Service due to? to *Christ the Messiah*, to whom the Lord hath said, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee, to whom the Heavens are given for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for his possession, whom he shall break with a Rod of Iron, and dash*

dash them in pieces like a Pottery Vessel. Certainly such a Potent Lord, Son of God, deserves to be served with fear by all Kings and Judges of the Earth; and 'tis his Cause, not Man's, which now is under debate, his Right and Title being questioned, which if Men in Places and Power do not, as they are bound, Assert and Vindicate, to speak in Mordecai's words to Esther, *Deliverance shall arise from another place*, some others will do God's Work, *but thou and thy Father's House shall be destroyed*. For the Lord Jesus himself will in his due time not only do't, but also require it at the hands of those who neglected it, which is a most abominable Crime, no less than, as much as in them lieth, to set their hands to his Condemnation, and suffer him again to be Crucified for pretended Blasphemy, for assuming himself to be the Son of God, which the Jews did well call *making himself God*. For the Names God, Son of God, simply, properly and absolutely taken, imply Divine Nature, as Man, Son of Man do Humane; therefore said the Jews to Pilate, *By our Law*, that is of Blasphemy, *he ought to die, for he made himself the Son of God*, which if he was not, then, (without Blasphemy let it be spoken, and the thoughts make my Hair stand on end) he had been a Blasphemer, a Lyar, and an Impostor, and such the Socinian Principles impiously make him to be.

And because I said, it had been well if at first that necessary care had been taken, especially by those that are most concern'd, to prevent it; thence he doth infer, that tho' *not indeed in plain words, but intelligibly* p. 27. enough, I said it had not been done, which after his usual, calm, and Christian-Spirited way, he calls a *meer Story, my own pure Invention, and a notorious Slander*; and to prove it so, in his Head he frames an Idea of an Hurly burly and Confusion in opposing of Socinianism, and this he would make a Play of, and without any distinction ridicule all that appear'd against it: *The Opposers*, saith he, *did but scuffle tumultuously with they knew not whom nor what, and in the event it appeared they were more afraid than hurt*; and to ridicule it the more, he saith, *This zealous Leader would* p. 18. *scower through the dark Vales of Ancient Fathers and*
General

General Councils; that learned Author would bufile in the thorny Thickets of the School-men; here indeed is to be found the flourish of wild Rhetorick sallying into sundry Metaphors, as he speaks of, and he adds, One or two now and then with wondrous Confidence and manly Resolution, would bolt out upon the open Plains of Natural Reason, but they were quickly forced to shelter, not being able to bear the brightness and warmth of the Meridian Sun, which illuminates and gives light to those Plains; these are high Fancies and true Bombast, if any thing be so, surely the Man hath read *Don Quixot*: This People, who condemn in others something of Metaphors, allow it to the full themselves, as being privileged Persons who may say and do what they please, and all is well: But, alas, all these opposers of *Socinianism* were but Fools for their pains, especially those who would talk of Reason with them who are the great Masters of it, and could not stand before them, but were sent to School with a Rod upon their Back, and all this depth of Learning, height of Fancy, closeness of Reasoning, brightness of Eloquence, and clearness of Style, are set in form of a Triumphal Cant; yet for all this, for greater security, he still runs under the shelter, for after he hath talk'd of some of our old School Terms, of which we had no great opinion our selves, (whether we will or not this Man is always among us) and kept them only because we could get no better, but then the wisest of our Doctors explained them to a very honest Sense. Speak, said one formerly, that I may know thee; so this People are known by their talk; but still I say our Man runs to the shelter when he saith, *Oxbodox with us who are the majority of the Church*, which if it was true, as 'tis not, would be but to follow the Multitude to believe and do Evil.

Something he would be picking out against my Citation out of the Book of *The Reformation of Ecclesiastical Laws*, wherein without passing Sentence, as he pretends I do, I humbly offer a Precedent of what was formerly done in like cases: And suppose the Book had been written before *Socinus* was born, yet it may reach him and his Opinions; as for instance, when a Law is enacted, it doth reach those who break it, tho' born

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born never so long after; and we know a Law can be broken in several ways, nay sometimes Laws are made not only to restrain present Crimes, but also to prevent others to come; for 'tis the prudence of the Law-giver not only to punish Evils in being, but also to prepare a remedy against those which may happen: therefore if *Socinians* in the Land do any thing forbidden by some Law, tho' never so old, if unrepealed, they are liable to the Penalty of it: The Law doth more directly regard Things than Persons: When the Law makes a thing to be Treason which was not so before, yet whosoever hereafter, tho' unborn when the Law was enacted, commits it, is no doubt by that Law guilty of Treason; this truth one may know without *Prophetick Inspiration*.

As to what I add out of King Edward's Letter to Archbishop *Cranmer*, &c. how according to the Power, Form and Effect of a certain Act of Parliament in the Third Year of his Reign, he had appointed them to compile his Ecclesiastical Laws; his wresting and unfaithfully representing the thing is clear and palpable, for he would make my Observation thereupon, how in those Laws there is something of a Parliamentary Authority, because he saith, *he hath chosen them by virtue of an Act of Parliament in the Third Year of his Reign*, to be gain said by my next words by him misquoted thus, *That something wants a Parliamentary Stamp*, when they are thus, *and if there be any thing wanting, it lieth in your power to set a Parliamentary Stamp upon't*; he relates them Absolutely, and I Conditionally with an if; I take it to be good Sense to say, There is already something of a Parliaments Authority, and in case there be any thing wanting, this present Parliament may supply it if they please: It is great pity that this spoils his Witty Jest in that place of a *Something that's just as good as Nothing*: I shall have a farther tryal of their misrepresenting things. I find they are nor so much concerned as to what the Gospel saith about Matters in dispute, as they are about what the Law saith when it reaches their Persons; threaten them with a Parliament, and they are more concern'd, than if you would set the whole Bible in order against them.

There-

Therefore they are nettled with the Fourth Canon directly pointed at them by name, of the Ecclesiastical Constitutions by both Convocations in 1640, and by King *Charles the First*, *straighly enjoyned and commanded to be diligently observed and executed*. The King is Supreme Head of the Church within his Dominions; by virtue of that Supremacy King *Charles* of his own voluntary Act, and without any violence or compulsion, set upon them his Royal Authority; and his Memory is not become so odious and contemptible, and in that particular so slighted, that no regard at all should be had for it: and tho' Socinians despise the Authority of those who went before, I dare say in the Nation there be some who are not of their mind; and as we know the Legislative Power to be lodged in Kings, Lords and Commons, so we hope they will agree in things which tend to the Glory of God, the good of the Nation, and that upon occasion none of the three, through God's influence, will, as I said before, give the Convocation any Repulse about things within their Sphere which represented in Parliament: But I find you are as Angry, Hot and Fiery (I make use of your own words) against Convocations as against Calvinism, for you speak of the *Ceremonial or Sanginary Rules and Orders, Canons and Constitutions of the Convocational Clergy*; and let me say, how in the same Page you give the Clergy some other Lashes, which is not Brotherly done; but I hope you will give me leave to think, if not to say, that you or your Partner may be of the Tribe, if so, then in *Moses's* Words let me tell you, *Ye take too much upon you, ye Sons of Levi*.

p. 30.

Num. 16.

7.

The Man seeing he is unable to defend his own Cause, would be suing for help; in order to't, he maliciously and falsely would suggest, that *I have flurried the Honour of my Lords the Bishops*, when I no where have named or so much as pointed at them, only in a place of my Epistle where it was unavoidable, 'tis upon the occasion of a Quotation out a Book call'd *The Reformation of the Ecclesiastical Laws*, my words are these, *According to this, Bishops are to take cognizance, inquire into and declare whether or not the Person or Persons be guilty of Blasphemy, which being clear,*

p. 31.

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he or they (according to that Law) are to be delivered into the Civil Magistrate's hand; but if through neglect or otherwise any of the Bishops happen not to act their part, and thereby stop the Course of Justice, certainly the Magistrate is to look into't: This Man, who in several places abuses Convocations, would, to serve his turn, in this seem to be much concern'd for the Lords Bishops: Of this false Accusation he gives two Reasons, the first is this, *For th^t several of them have written learnedly and angrily against Socinianism, some in the Real, some in the Nominal Trinitarian way, yet Mr. G. takes no notice at all of this; and for this reason he affirms, he most audaciously and styly slurs the Honour of my Lords the Bishops.* His second Reason is, *He often declares his aversion from the Arminians, of which Persuasion most of the Bishops have shewn themselves.* Is this good Logick; I am against Arminianism, therefore against Episcopacy, because, it may be, some of the Bishops are Arminians, it will not stick; I disprove Arminianism, and honour the Bishops, as, some of their Lordships can witness; but to aggravate, he falsely and foolishly saith, *I have thereby styly and desperately wounded the Honour of the chief Defenders of the Orthodox Faith.* Out of this he would prove me to be a rank Socinian, or else I would not, saith he, have done so; wherein he confesses Socinians to be desperate Enemies to the Lords Bishops. And to retort it, he being a Socinian, must be an Enemy to the Bishops: But I see the Devil is Devil still, a Slanderer, a false Accuser, tho' hypocritically he pretends much Meekness and Charity: This very same Man who but one Leaf before blames one much better than himself for not taking care of his Language, for his liberal Railing and throwing his Wit and his Foam about: he in many places of his Letter doth so against me, slanderously charging me with impudent Reflections; and again, *Is it not the biggest Impudence in him?* and in other places they throw such like words upon me: Therefore thou art unexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thy self, for thou that judgest dost the same things. Nay, not only so, but the Man hath from first to last broken

p. 28.

p. 33.

p. 40.

Rom. 2. 17

not one, but most Rules of Humanity; it would be a happy thing if every Man could but know the Plague of his own Heart.

And were it not that a good Advile, which he doth much want, bestowed upon him, would be so much time and labour lost, I would put him in mind, how by God's command, there was no Sacrifice offered without Salt, an Emblem of Prudence, to shew how God would not have Men rashly to meddle with Holy things, and except, with a serious and humble frame of Spirit, and with an awful Reverence, (which was the true Preparation of the Sanctuary) they were qualified for it, otherwise he would not relish or accept, but only (to speak in Solomon's words) account it to be *the Sacrifice of Fools*: This under the Gospel in Matters of Religion, ought to be a Rule for us, as in relation to God, so between Man and Man, for the Apostle saith, *Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man*: which being joined with another Apostles Exhortation, *Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear*, or Reverence, as the Greek word doth also signifie, doth teach us how we ought to speak with Grace, Fear and Reverence of Matters of Religion, and with Meekness towards those whom we speak to: But these Men do quite the contrary, for of one side they jest with Holy things, and on the other they injuriously use those whom they deal with; that is, are profane with God and rude with Men: They cry up Moderation and Mildness, yet with their Railing, ironical and brutish Stile and Language, are ever the first to break the Rules thereof; to call one Impudent, and at several times too, and to give the Lye, it argues in them neither Breeding nor good Nature, therefore they must expect that Men thus unhandsonly provok'd, will take some notice of it, tho' it be contrary to their natural inclination and practise.

Here upon this account I must desire the Reader to take special notice of the Spirit which this sort of Men, whom we now deal against, are acted by, and

in particular of the want of Sincerity, Moderation, Modesty and Judgment, and this shall be within a narrow compass, out of what is said by one of the Men (as I take it) whom I have to deal with; in the Apology for Mr. Toland, are with great approbation quoted some Lines of one of their own, whom he calls *that Celebrated Unitarian in the Agreement*, he hath written, *of the Unitarians with the Catholick Church*, p. 34, 35. He highly commends that Man with the name *Celebrated*, in hopes upon occasion of the same return of Flattery from him, for *Asinus asinum fricas*. The very Man whose Letter I now am about examining, would charge me with slurring the Honour of the Lords Bishops, and desperately wounding the Honour of the chief Defenders of the Orthodox Faith: Would not one think that this Man is highly concerned for, and hath a great Honour for the Bishops, whom he well calls the Chief Defenders of the Catholick Faith; but this must needs be either out of Hypocrisie to serve, as he thinks, his present turn against me, or by an *Irony*, for Socinians love neither Bishops nor Convocations; for will they sincerely call Defenders of the Orthodox Faith, those who writ against them? And for proof of this, let us observe how in the fore-quoted place of the Apology, they use one of our most Eminent and Learned Bishops; when I speak thus, the Reader will presently know I mean my Lord Bishop of Worcester, who by them is named in the place: *I know not*, saith he, *what it was to his Lordship's purpose to fall upon Mr. Toland's Book*; but if he knows it not, his Lordship did, and we may suppose it was to some purpose, or else he might as well say, the Lord Bishop knew not what he did: One would think they cannot have the face to teach him what he must do: but here follows that which is worse, *but if he would needs attack the Book, he should have dealt fairly*. Which plainly enough implies the Bishop hath not dealt fairly; and to shew herein that I am not mistaken, he adds, *and not carp'd only at a few Passages, and those too so mangled and deformed by his representation of them, that I dare to affirm, Mr. Toland doth not know his own Book in the Bishop's representation of it, is not*

pag. 42,
43.

this a plain demonstration of the great respect which such Men have for the Lords Bishops, and of the Reason this Man hath to accuse me for slurring and desperately wounding the Honour of the Bishops.

But let us turn leave, and see in how different a Style that *Socinian* speaks of Mr. Toland and his Book, him he calls the Learned and Ingenious Author, and of the Book he saith, *I do not perceive, to speak truly, but that Book still stands in its full strength*: and not only so, but, if we believe him, *it hath also acquired a farther reputation*, by what hath been written against it, which that great Master of Learning doth despisingly call *an unsuccessful nibbling at it*. But this kind of comparison between two so highly different Persons, is odious, for it carries along with it a great disparagement to one of them against whom is given the preference, and is an invincible proof of want of judgment in such Men as pretend to make it: but the commendation or discommendation of that sort of People, being so misapply'd, are insignificant; and it would be no Credit, rather the contrary, for an Orthodox Person to be commended by them: But to carry on their Confidence to the utmost they challenge the Lord Bishop *to answer the Reasons in their own Books against the Trinity*. Yet for all this, and after their great Commendation of Mr. T's Book, those wise and cautious Men being afraid of any thing that smells of the Fire, as that Book doth, they declare about it, *in which, and for which, we are not in the least concern'd*: But I think they were for one which some while ago was burnt, whilst many more of theirs which now are abroad deserve the same Fate. But as we must not expect they will follow the Example of those who brought in their Books (among which we may well think were no worse than some of the *Socinians* are) and burnt them, which these will not themselves do of theirs, for indeed 'tis the proper work of the common Executioner, far from it they set them out and commend as much as they can, nay they are so bold as to let the World know there were such Books of theirs abroad, and we find it many times, witness Mr. T's Apology among the Advertisements in the *Post-Boy*, and such

printed

printed Papers, and this in defiance of Laws and Parliaments, whose Authority in Matters of Religion, as observed before, they deny: So that it were but fit that on this occasion that Illustrious Body would be pleased to assert and vindicate their Right. For that sort of Men if they had Power, would in the denial of this Authority soon pass from Religious to Civil Matters, wherefore 'tis the Interest of Church and State to support one another, for they are like the Twain Children, born and bred together, between which was such a sympathy, that when one was Well, Sick, or Strong, the other was so too, and as they were born, so they died together.

He who but a little before said that the *Socinians* will agree to the disputed Article if they may explain it, meant after their own way, is such a stranger to Scripture, that if it be not the Printer's fault, I am apt to believe, because in the Margin I quoted not the place, he knew not whom I meant when to *Socinians* I apply'd the Character which Scripture gives of *Ishmael*, whose hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him; for instead of *Ishmaels* the word *Infidels* is in. Tho' I do not mind the nauseous stuff wherewith he hath fill'd up the rest of that Page and the following, yet I well know and take notice how he is not satisfied to misrepresent me to the Lords Bishops, but most maliciously would traduce me as one who makes impudent Reflections on the King and Parliament, thereby to make me obnoxious: To be Impudent were an invasion upon his Property, which I never was nor shall be guilty of. Here I might claim the Law of Retaliation; he cannot defend his Cause, therefore he would throw his Venom upon me, *Si non morte tamen arte*; Now this Calumny of his, he doth ground upon these words of mine; That to the Toleration of those two transcendent Wickednesses, Blasphemy and Idolatry, we may chiefly attribute the cause of the Chastisements which make the Nation uneasy. I hope none will deny that Sins bring God's Judgements upon Nations, and when we feel them 'tis our duty to speak the Truth, our Sins are the cause of this; Afflictions do not arise out of the Dust, but if we must believe

p. 31.

Gen. 16,
12.

Joth. 7.

believe Scripture, Chastisements or Punishments of Nations, Families and Persons, come from the hand of God; for as he is most Just, so leaves nothing unrewarded; if in the World there was any Person free from Sin, that very same should also be free from all manner of Pains; but Punishment is tyed to the tail of Sin, and when we feel God's Chastisements, and we know they are inflicted for Sin, then the most notorious, the greatest and most frequent Sins are obvious to our Eyes, as the two in question must needs be, and thereupon we should say, *Lord we have sinned against Heaven and against thee.* About this Point, I shall out of Scripture, bring a Precedent of what must be done in such Cases: The *Israelites* are smitten at *Ai*, whereupon *Joshua* rent his Cloths and fell upon his Face, and God said unto him, *Israel hath sinned, I will be no more with you, except ye destroy the accursed from among you;* the Accursed, both Person and Thing, at that time were destroyed; and now if not the Persons, at least the Thing should be, if we will have God among us; and what things in the World more accursed than Blasphemy and Idolatry? wherefore I then did, and now do conclude, that all Christian and prudent care ought to be used to remove Blasphemy and Idolatry out of the Kingdom, but how to effect it, 'tis to be left to those whom it belongs to, but still the thing ought to be done; Now I ask, Is this to make an impudent Reflection against King and Parliament? But they make a real one, for under the notion that he is no Persecutor, they would proclaim his Majesty and the Parliament to favour and protect Blasphemy and Heresie, that is *Socinianism*.

But this Gentleman, according to the Spirit which they all are originally acted by, would profanely ridicule the dispensations of God's special Providence, and divest that infinite Majesty of his being the just Judge of the World, who doth execute Justice and Judgment: After this rate the Old World was Drowned by Chance, tho' the Flood had been foretold 120 Years before: Thus *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* were consumed by Accident, and without God's special Appointment, tho' he out of Heaven rained Fire and Brimstone: So
by

by Hazard Nadab and Abihu were consumed, tho' Scripture saith, *There went out Fire from the Lord and devoured them.* Likewise, without a special Providence, the Earth opened her mouth and swallowed up Korah, Dathan and Abiram, tho' it was a special Judgment of God; as was that of the 14700 Men, who for their murmuring against Moses and Aaron, as we read in the same Chapter, died of the Plague. In the like manner, after their Principles, the Famine in David's days of three Years, Year after Year, came merely according to a general course of Nature, without a particular Cause, and special Providence; certainly when David inquired about it, the Lord assigned the particul Cause, and answered, *It is for Saul and his bloody House, because he slew the Gibeonites.* The Sin, with the Punishment, and by whom inflicted, were all named and expressed, yet against all Right and Reason, they would not have this Case to be a special Providence, for they say there is no such thing in the World. But why should I bring a Candle to light the Sun, and in a thing which God's Word doth so plainly and fully demonstrate, how to punish National, Family and Personal Sins, God sends the Plague, Famine, the Sword, venomous Beasts, the Locust, the Canker-Worm, the Caterpillar, and the Palmer-Worm, which the Lord calls *his great Army which I sent among you*. Did the Plagues of Egypt come at a venture, or were they inflicted by God to punish that Nation for their Sin? God threatened the Children of Israel for their Disobedience, *to send upon them Cursing, Vexation and Rebuke; the Pestilence, a Consumption, a Fever, an Inflammation, an extreme Burning, the Sword, Blasting, Mildew, the both of Egypt, the Emerods, with Scabs and Itch, Madnefs, Blindnefs, Astonishment of heart, &c.* as expressed in Deut. 28. Are not all these Judgments of God upon Men for their Sins? Have I then spoken any harm, that you should Cavil at what I say, that to the Toleration of Blasphemy and Idolatry, we may chiefly attribute the cause of the Chastisments which make the Nation uneasie through losses by Sea, by Land, by Fire, or any other way you named or can name? Blasphemy and Idolatry ('tis a sad truth) do abound

2 Sam.
21. 1.

Joel 2. 25.

abound in the Land, and a flood of all Evil in Doctrine and Practice hath overflowed it; and tho' it be against Gospel and Law, yet no visible effectual care is taken to suppress it: Can we be unconcerned when we hear God by his Prophet speaking thus, *Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? shall not I be avenged on such a Nation as this?* Jer. 5. 29. With such a Warrant in my hand, I am neither ashamed nor afraid openly to declare, that winking at Blasphemy and Idolatry, we may well reckon among the chief Causes which have drawn God's Rod upon the back of the Nation, and the more, because the Sins which there move God to speak by his Prophet, are against Men, but these we now complain against are directly against God: And if God be angry for their not judging for Men, will he not be so if Men neglect to Judge for him? Do but read the last Verse of the same Chapter, where mention is made of Distempers, if not exactly the same in relation to Persons, yet in Nature much like ours, and take notice of God's Expostulation there, *What will ye do in the end thereof?*

Now the Misdemeanour they would wrongfully charge me with, I may justly retort upon them: With all due Respect I addressed to both Houses, and humbly represented things as 'tis usual in points of Grievances, whereof some are of a Spiritual as others of a Temporal nature: I then said, and now say it again, that according to Divine and Humane Laws, Blasphemy should be rooted out and Blasphemers punished: To ask for Justice is not to prescribe the Judges any thing what they ought to do, and there is nothing like this in my whole Epistle, as these words of mine which the Author of the Letter hath taken notice of, do evidence. *Thus having laid open the Disease, I leave it for your Piety and Christian Wisdom to find out, and apply the true and proper Remedy:* We know 'tis for the Supreme Judges to do Justice in what manner and degree they please: no Man of sense will deny it to be in the power of, and to belong to the Magistrates Office to punish Delinquents against God as well as those against Men, of the first as well as of the second Table, Blasphemers, Idolaters, Profaners of God's Holy Name,

as well as Murderers, Adulterers and Thieves: S. Paul was no sanguinary Man, yet in one place, after an enumeration of several things, whereof some are less grievous than Blasphemy, concludeth, *That they which commit such things are worthy of death.* For my part, I neither in my Epistle nor in the Preface have said, or designed to say so; yet if I had, without being a Sanguinary Man, I here have a Warrant for it. Rom. i. 32.

But having spoken of my self, I now must come to you and say, Ye both have been much wanting in your due respect for that Illustrious Assembly of *Parliament*: For one humbly to Address or Petition the Supreme Judges to redress things which are amiss, is no disrespect; but to pretend to be their Apologist and make use of their Name in an ironical way, as ye, I may say, saucily have done in the Title of your Pamphlet, is certainly to want a due respect and to deserve Punishment: To call a Libel against the Doctrine of the Religion by Law established by the name of *An Apology for the Parliament, most humbly representing*, &c. is a great Abuse, and a piece of high Impudence in you, which hangs together with your whole Carriage; for contrary to the known Laws of the Land, and in defiance of the Civil and Ecclesiastical Jurisdctions, you do print, publish, and most insolently go about to Vindicate your Heretical and Blasphemous Opinions in opposition to and the disturbance of the Church by Law established. And when ye are not able to defend your bad Cause, to give the thing a wrong side, the Superior Power to be your drudges, must by you be brought in, but 'tis in you a high presumption to think you can impose upon them: Now for my part I must tell you, that when I am engaged in any Controversie I stick to the Point, beg for no Foreign help, and Answer not with Injuries but with good Arguments, ye do the contrary. But over and above what I have said, to shew how with humbly Addressing my self to the Parliament to ask Justice against you, and towards preventing the growth of Socinianism, I did nothing but what is according to Law, I here lay down an undeniable proof of it, with a Copy of the Presentment of the Grand Jury of *Middlesex* on the last day of the last

Monday
May 17.

Easter Term 1697, and this according to directions given by the Judges, who must know the Law. The Names of the worthy Persons that were of it, do for their Piety and Zeal deserve to be recorded in Letters of Gold, and 'tis hoped this may be a Precedent for others to do the like in other parts of the Kingdom.

A Copy of the Presentment of the Grand Jury of Middlesex, the last day of the Term at Westminster, viz.

WE the Jurors sworn to enquire on the behalf of our Sovereign Lord the King, of all Offences committed in the County of Middlesex, in consideration of our Duty and in obedience to the Directions given us by Mr. Justice Rookeby in his Charge, do humbly present that, We find by daily experience, that several great and fundamental Articles of the Christian Religion, as they are professed by the Church of England and contained in the 39 Articles, and established as the Avowed Doctrine of the Church of England by several Acts of Parliament, are not only disputed and questioned, but absolutely denyed, and particularly the Doctrine of the Trinity, of the Divinity of Christ, and of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, and Books are daily writ, printed and published, either directly contrary to the said Doctrine, or by consequence in opposition to them, denying all the Mysteries of the Christian Religion, and resolving all into such Notions as are to be made good by Humane Reason, and thereby making void the whole revealed Religion, and destroying the Necessity of Faith in order to Eternal Salvation, by means whereof Arianism, Socinianism, Atheism and Deism do greatly abound: and there are Profelytes to the same daily made, to the great Scandal of the Church of England and the Orthodox Members thereof: For preventing of which for the future, We do present that all care possible ought to be taken for the speedy discovering of all such Books as are so writ, printed or published, contrary to the known Doctrine of the Church of England, and the Authors, Printers and Publishers of the same; and for punishing the Authors, Printers and Publishers thereof according to the utmost

most Severity of the Laws; and for the suppressing all such Books of that kind as are already printed, and for preventing the printing any more for the time to come: And we do farther present, that a Book Entitled, Christianity not Mysterious: or a Treatise shewing, That there is nothing in the Gospel contrary to Reason or above it, and that no Christian Doctrine can be properly called a Mystery; supposed to be written by one Mr. Toland: And also another Book Entitled, The Reasonableness of Christianity, as delivered in the Scriptures: And also one other Book Entitled, The Lady's Religion, in a Letter the Honourable the Lady Howard, are Books fit to be suppressed, and the Authors, Printers and Publishers of the same ought to have such Punishment inflicted on them, as by the Laws of the Land they may. Item, We present a Pamphlet lately published, Entitled, A Letter to a Convocation-Man concerning the Rights, Powers and Privileges of that Body, to be Scandalous and against the Constitution of the Government, and ought to be suppressed and the Author punished.

Now ye may see by the Agreement of this Presentment, with the things contained in my Epistle and Preface, to which 'tis posteriour, how in what I said or did, I was not in the wrong nor out of the way: I faithfully give it as it is, without changing Words or altering the Sense, as some of you have done of some of your Citations out of my Papers; ye are always sure to give the worst Construction of Words and Things, like Spiders ye turn all things into Poison; about which, besides what I already observed, I shall on the way take notice of one thing more, when I say no Soldier in an Enemy's Country ought to struggle out of the way, &c. for he that doth so, ventures to be knocked on the head; you put in *ought* instead of *ventures*, is this fairly done? Certainly 'tis a great difference between saying a Man runs the hazard of being knocked, and he ought to be knocked on the head; so if I should but write or speak *Reason*, you with adding one Letter, would soon make it *Treason*; and if you write or speak *Treason* with taking off one Letter, you can soon make it *Reason*; this is said to shew your

P. 36.

Partiality: As to what follows in the same Page and the next after about Dr. *Sh*--- against his Antagonist as against me, I shall not trouble my head about it, only God forgive and give you Grace to mend: I see all that have any thing to do with this Man or Iye in his way and are not of his mind, must prepare for the like usage: but, I say, I do not concern my self about Persons so much as about the Cause; and therefore whosoever would in the Godhead set up three Spirits and Substances, is in my opinion fallen into a fundamental Heresie; and whosoever is against such, in that same thing, I join with, because I always love to be for the Truth.

In what follows I desire the Reader to take notice of the Man's want of Sincerity: As well as I, he knows we are not and cannot be agreed upon the very Terms he sets down, for they contain the quintessence of their Error about the Holy Trinity; for, Sirs, ye would have Jesus Christ to be not a Person, but only an Attribute as the Wisdom of God, so the Holy Ghost to be only the Vertue and Power of God, and not an Hypostasis a Person of the Godhead; for tho' one of you saith, that for Peace-sake ye submit to the Phrase of the Church, that is to the name Person, yet ye interpret it not as the Church doth. Therefore, tho' you say, the Unitarians, the Catholick Church, the Translator and I, are at perfect Agreement, and tho' we agree in the Oneness of the Godhead or of one Divine Nature, and, to make u'se of your words, that there is *One Infinite Spiritual Substance*, yet we are far from agreeing with you in what follows, *with three Properties, unbegotten, begotten and proceeding*, &c. except ye explain your meaning otherwise than ye use to do: *Arius* under a word which if well taken, might be harmless enough, sheltered his Error, so 'tis usual with you, ye are meerly for Words, but we do besides Words look for Things, and would have such Words as are proper as much as may be, to signify the Things; Now your threefold distinction of *Original Mind, reflex Wisdom, and Divine Love*, may be sufficient to represent what you mean thereby, but not what we believe: We make a distinction between the
Property

Property and the Person of the Godhead, but you do confound them, and would have it to be but one and the same: Now if with us you will say, that in one and most simple Nature of God are three distinct Persons to whom the infinite and singular Nature of one only God is common, and that these three distinct Persons, the Attributes of that one God do belong to, then you say something to the purpose, or else, like the *Gilgameses*, you come in to us only to deceive us: We assert three Persons and not barely three Properties in the Godhead; we say the Father is a Person, the Son a Person, and the Holy Ghost a Person, and so three Persons; but we don't say, the Father is an Attribute, the Son an Attribute, and the Holy Ghost an Attribute, thereby of three Persons to make three Attributes: We cannot say the Son of God to be a Property or Attribute; we cannot say an Attribute of Divine Nature was made Flesh; we cannot say three Properties appeared in our Saviours Baptism, or that we are baptised in the Name of three Properties: Therefore ye may see we are not so far agreed as you said; if you will have us to be agreed, you must come to us, for we declare we cannot go to you, that's the easiest and surest way of the two, for we are tyed by a Revelation, and may go no farther than it doth allow us; but your Human Reason is a Latitudinarian which can stretch a great way; we may not, we cannot go beyond the bounds which God in his Word hath prescribed us, but ye are Free-willers and at liberty; to day your Reason may teach you one thing, to morrow another; for as you say your selves, *a Doctrine which at one time may be convenient, may be otherwise when Circumstances of Times shall alter*, but with us, no Circumstances can alter our Heavenly Doctrine. Out of this you may see, how all this while, *I have not been fighting against the Man in the Moon, or as you very civilly expels it, making a Red for a foolish Back of my own, or so speak home, a Fagot to roast my own Ribs.* p. 14. p. 37.

But upon a surer ground I may say, he hath been in a Dream or in a hot violent Fit, for he hath been striking on all sides and spared none that lay in his way; as for me, I am the Man, and therefore in the Fit, having

p. 38.

p. 26, 82
29.

having forgotten the Cause he hath at me almost in every Page; and in one place he admires at my *extravagant Zeal, who would have the Socinians burnt for their compliance with the Church of England*: If so, then indeed there were cause to admire, but there is true ground of admiration that he thinks it so; but really nothing is to be admired at, either in or from him, for he calls me a *Papist*, a *Calvinist*, and a *Zealous one*, a *Socinian*, nay a *Real one*: He saith he is no *Socinian*, but I am, when he writes for and I against them; this is a *Hocus Pocus*, 'tis and 'tis not; surely there is cause to suspect something is out of order within that brains of his, or an extraordinary brazen-facedness, however let him as he can secure all this from Contradiction, *Et eris mihi magnus Apollo*: When I think upon such Men as pretend to alter the Nature of things, I am put in mind of what a famous *Papish* Author saith, That the Pope can make that to be Sin which is no Sin, and that not to be Sin which is Sin; so do these Men who would seem to be much against Popery, yet follow several of their Maxims, and would make that to be a Nonsense which is good Sense, and that to be no Contradiction which is, and so on the contrary: If these Men themselves be not Mysteries, as one calls me, their dark Sentences are; all this while the Cause is safe enough.

But *Calvin* not so, how roughly doth he handle him on all occasions, if he were alive he would not be good to give to Dogs, tho' neither he nor a dozen more such ones would be worthy to carry his Books: I confess 'tis to me, and ought to be a wonder to others, to find how mad some Men in the World are against that faithful Servant of God, once in his Life and Conversation, and now in his Works and Labours an Eminent Instrument in his Hand as for Instruction, so at first in the Work of Reformation: This is a Fit of Rage which several Years since, out of Envy, some in Parts much inferiour to him, began to be possessed of, and by Men of the same Kidney, hath been propagated to this very day, whereof the Authors of the Two Letters are real Instances; for to speak in *Paul's* words, *they are exceeding mad against him*, and as they

Acts 26.
11.

are

are against his Memory and Person now far out of their reach, so they are broken loose and so hot and fiery against the Doctrines he taught, that all the Water of the *Leman Lake* could hardly cool them; what they call *p. 28.* Calvinism they adorn with these Epithets, *Proud, sour,* and *fiery Qualifications*, Calvinistical Impatience, and *p. 35.* many such more, whereof this Orthodox is one, *The Herefie of the Tristeists is not worse than uncharitable and ill natur'd Calvinism:* Therein I shall conclude with this, *In truth I think Heylin was over modest to p. 33. p. 41.* esteem a Presbyterian that is a Calvinist worse than a Papist: Here is your Protestants; and as if this had not been enough, his own venom he throws out in the same place, *for my part I esteem a Christian from whatsoever Sect denominated, not excepting the Socinians, more honourable than a Persecuting Calvinist:* Tho' the word Persecuting had been left out, it had been all one to that Christian Righteous Soul of his. But as for *Socinus* he was a most excellent Man, very sound in the Faith, and who, if we will believe this Man, hath by his Works laid a great Obligation upon the World, and he subscribes to what one of the Gang said of him, *That none since the Apostles hath deserved p. 18.* better of the Christian Religion; so that a Man may more avail himself by reading his Works; than by perusing all the Fathers together, with the Writings of more modern Authors. This People either never read, or care not for what Paul saith, *Let your Moderation be known Phil. 4. 5.* unto all men, for they observe it neither for *Socinus* nor against *Calvin*; but having elsewhere had an occasion in few few words to do this faithful Servant of Christ some Justice, I shall leave off speaking of his Person to take some brief notice of his Works.

That which most nettles his Enemies are the Doctrines about Grace and Providence mentioned in the Two Letters, which they call *Calvinism*: But if they would not so proudly despise all Antiquity, but peruse some of *Augustin's* Works, who lived 1200 Years before *Calvin*, they might find he was a Calvinist, so were *Hilarius, Prosper, Fulgentius*, and others, who so long before he was born, could, as well as he did afterwards, find those same Doctrines in the Word of God; and accordingly,

Luke 18.

11, 12, 13.

Prov. 3. 5.

accordingly, the beginning, progress and end of our Salvation, and from first to last, we attribute to God's free Grace, which in that matter we can never yield too much nor too little to any thing of our own; we do not, like the Pharisee, boast in our Prayers, that we Fast twice a Week, give Tithes, and are not Extortioners, Unjust, and make no Comparison with our Neighbours as being better Men than they, but we say, God be merciful to us miserable Sinners; for we are commanded to *trust in the Lord with all our hearts*, and forbidden to *lean unto our own understanding*, which is as good as to say, depend not upon your own Reason; therefore in any thing we go about, we are to call upon God for his help, and the gracious influence of his Holy Spirit, being sure that without it we can do no good; and we be sufficiently taught in Scripture to trust to no strength or abilities of our own; and when in the World we meet with Men of Principles contrary to these, we find it not strange, for we know that *there must be also Heresies among us*, or those called Christians, *that they which are approved may be made manifest among us*: Wherefore as long as we have about these Matters such a Foundation as Paul the great Preacher of Free Grace hath laid, we need not to care for all Exceptions or Cavils of Men or Devils: These are such Truths, as we hope through Grace, never to be ashamed or afraid to own unto the end, even to lay down our Lives, as he did his, for so Glorious a Cause.

John 1.

17.

Matt. 16.

18.

The Person of the Lord Jesus Christ and his Grace are so linked together, that no Man strikes at one, but the other feels it; tho' may be in a different degree, they have a common Enemy, so he who is against one is against both, which I positively affirm of *Sectarians*; *Grace and Truth*, saith the Evangelist, *came by Jesus Christ*, who coming into the World brought Grace along with him, for he is the Spring of it, which he manifested in framing and redeeming of his Church, the Foundation whereof and of our Christian Religion lies in this great and fundamental Truth whereof Peter made a Confession, how Jesus Christ is *the Son of the living God*; upon the verity whereof, there our Saviour declared that his Church should

Chap. 1.
24, 25.

should be built, and at the same time signified that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against us. For this is the House built upon a Rock, which, tho' the River descendeth, and the Flood come, and the Wind blow, yet it falls not, for it is founded upon a Rock. In that Promise of his the Lord Jesus declares two things; First, The Gates, that is the Power of Devils in Hell, would afterwards make some attempt against that fundamental Truth of his being the Son of the living God. As indeed, it hath from time to time raised its strongest Batteries against it, as not long after his Ascension, even in the life time of his beloved Disciple, and after his death, the Attacks began by Simon the Sorcerer, Elion, Cerinthus, Menander, and afterwards by other Hellish Instruments. But in Arius's time great strugglings happened with so prodigious a success, that all the World was laid to be Arius; hence came the Saying, *All the World against Athanasius, and Athanasius against all the World*; so afterwards for the same Cause against our Saviour's Divinity, several fought under the Banners of Hell, as now, tho' more cunningly, Socinians do, having taken up the Outdgers; and as those Blasphemous Opinions were exploded out of the World, so shall be, in God's due time, those which are raging for the present, notwithstanding all the Craftiness, Malice and Power of Hell, and all Antichrists, of Devils and Men: This may so positively speaking, is grounded upon Christ's Promise, how the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against the truth of his being the Son of the living God, which his Church is built upon; and this is the Second thing, not only deduced from, but plainly contained in those words of the Lord Jesus, whose Person is a fit Object of Adoration, as his Grace is of Admiration. These Truths one may abundantly be satisfied with out of Scripture, which I much have made use of, because some places prove a Truth directly, others collaterally, and others are brought in to illustrate and give a light to the thing, so that Scripture is of several uses, nothing therein without some use; 'tis of it as of the Rivers in the Garden of Eden, they all did not run one and the same way.

But

A Plea for
Free-Grace
against
Free-will.

* p. 9, 20,

33.

But now to conclude, I in the first place put you in mind to Answer my Book, and then take this Occasion which you give me, in case ye knew it not before, to acquaint you, how upon those Matters I have written a Book hitherto Unanswered; if you have such an aversion for them as you express, do but give us in Print your Thoughts about it, 'tis a fair Field I offer you, but be not afraid, for 'tis not *Smithfield*: but if ye can defend that Cause no better than the *Socinians* about the Holy Trinity and Person of the Lord Jesus, then it will be in you but Time and Labour lost in vain. And if you go about it, be more Serious in a Business of so high a nature, and less Violent and Malicious; For should leave off Jelling with Holy things, and let it be without giving ill Language, for therein I yield you know ye do't more than my self, and write like Scholars and Gentlemen, without breaking the Bonds of Humanity, with Arguments as hard as ye please, but softer Words, and make no more haste than good speed; if ye come in that way, then by the Grace of God I will surely Answer you in the like manner; and tho' already there is Work enough cut for you, I doubt more than ye are well able to compass, yet several new Arguments I have to bring in: but if in the usual Scolding Reviling way, I will leave you to chew your Cud: May be your Bantering way of Writing hath succeeded against some, but be not mistaken, with others it will never do, come with good Arguments and then I am for you; however come which way you will, I declare I shall not in the least care whether you come alone or both together.

F. I. N. I. S.

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